YEAR

A POEM — BY — G. A. WARRINER.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. PS3151 Copyright No.

Shelf .W152

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

KEAR.

A POEM IN SEVEN CANTOS.

BY

REV. E. A. WARRINER.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
1882.

FS3159
.W152

Copyright, 1882, by Rev. E. A. Warriner.

O God, Existence, Nature's Soul and Law,
First unto thee my heart its homage pays;
For as from thine our conscious life we draw,
So from thy glory springs enduring praise.
Thou art the Light of lights, the Day of days;
In thee all brightness, life, and beauty hide;
Thou One in All, to thee my face I raise,—
O Father, Brother, Spirit, let not pride
Nor aught untrue in me my life from thine divide.

Kear, to whose gloomy spirit 'neath the pines
A ray of sunshine heavenly promise brought;
Thou priest who ministered at Nature's shrines,
And from her Soul her inspirations caught,
Which heavenly life, and love, and wisdom wrought,
Be still my teacher as in years gone by,
When daily sitting at thy feet I sought
To know life's true philosophy, and why
The light and darkness blend, and all things live and die.

And ye, too, spirits of earth's solitude,
Souls hid from sight, but once to flesh allied,
Who throng the silent dell, the lonely wood,
The pebbly paths where sylvan waters glide,
Draw near, nor from my eyes your presence hide;
The legends of your outward lives reveal;
For I, who to thy haunts my footsteps guide,
Would know the truths which outward forms conceal,—
The freedom, love, and joy that deathless spirits feel.

List! in the waters sweetly murmuring,
In the low breeze and rustling leaves I hear
The soft vibrations of a hidden string.
Lo! one by one the living dead appear,—
The plumed chief, the maiden, lover, seer,
Whose names and deeds to other days belong;
Who lived and died, were born and buried here,
Recalled to life by magic sylvan song,
People the woods and round the hidden minstrel throng.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

PROUD Susquehanna rolls his waters on,
Scarce mindful of the changes time has brought;
The Delaware and Iroquois have gone,
And every work by Nature's children wrought,
Yet the same spirit which her children caught
From cloud and sunshine, wood and mountain stream,
And which the laws of life and virtue taught,
Still lingers on his shores, and still the theme
Inspires of ancient legend and of poet's dream.

II.

Hidden, remote, in Pennsylvania's hills,
Thy vine-clad cottages, O fair Montrose!
Thy fields of green watered by mountain rills,
And the pure sparkle of thy winter's snows,
No romance of forgotten years disclose;
Yet here strange legends of the past abound,
Here hostile ashes side by side repose,
For thine was once "The Dark and Bloody Ground,"
Where heroes strove for fame and graves of glory found.

III.

Yet not of these the forest muses sing,
For scarce to listening ears nor woods nor streams
A lingering echo of vain glory bring.
A loftier theme inspires the poet's dreams;
A legend and a prophecy it seems,—
An aspiration of impassioned minds,
Which worldly wisdom vain delusion deems,
And yet the link God and his creatures binds,
And which e'en life in death, and joy in sorrow finds.

IV.

Whilom, one spring-time,—'twas the Moon of Leaves,
When Nipoon Oki, Summer's Soul, returns
With odorous, life-inspiring breath, and weaves
Anew his leafy bowers, his mossy urns,
And viny draperies o'er his couch of ferns;
When, in the evening sky and placid lake,
With softer light Osseo's spirit burns;
And, as the birds and flowers, all things partake,
His love renewed, and live each for another's sake,—

V.

A lonely lake, once called the Whispering Wave,
At twilight hour mirrored a maiden face
Of wondrous beauty, pure as sculptors grave
On spotless stone, yet dark as limners trace
On chancel windows; and a form whose grace
Was like the supple willow's bending o'er
Ewayea's dreamy tide,—maiden of royal race,
Named, as a crystal pebble on the shore,
Eniskin,—fairest spirit of the days of yore.

VI.

Her dress was green and russet, Nature's prints
Of spring and autumn, gathered at her waist
By woven belt of red and orange splints.
White moccasins her slender feet encased,
Beaded and worked in Nature's faultless taste
Of blending figures. Olive leggins bound
Her rounded limbs. Vermilion beads embraced
Her neck, bright-tinted as her lips. Around
Her form a scarlet mantle gracefully was wound.

VII.

Her birch canoe, close by the silvery strand,
Lay floating as an autumn leaf upon
The dark, still waters. Leaning on her hand,
Lightly and motionless, she sat alone
Therein, intently gazing down, as one
Entranced, into the glassy lake reflecting there
Her face beneath the moon, with stars that shone
As sparkling diamonds on her glossy hair,—
As jewelled coronet redeemed spirits wear.

VIII.

But now her thoughts are turned within. Her eyes,
Tender and sad, betray no consciousness
Of beauty, but of grief and sacrifice,
As those of cloistered women who repress
Instinctive longings which their hearts confess,—
The tender yearnings, passionate, and vain,
And sinful deemed, but which, indulged, oppress
Their souls with penitence, and yet again
Return; for love is life,—to it all joys pertain.

IX.

Love is the spirit of our sympathies,
Earthly or heavenly, sensual or pure:
Earthly, 'tis mortal; heavenly, never dies.
Though first untried, uncertain, immature,
If sympathies are true, 'twill e'er endure,
And grow and strengthen through eternal years,
Till in a perfect unity secure,
It overcomes all weakness, doubts, and fears,
And one with Love Supreme, it wipes away all tears.

X.

Eniskin's love was true, though long repressed
By earthly glory and ancestral pride;
Within her heart alone its power confessed,
And dwelling there with doubt and fear allied,—
A flame that could not die, whate'er betide
Her outward life,—it was both grief and joy,
A sore temptation and an angel guide.
Thus doubt and fear our purest faith alloy,
And torture most the souls which they can ne'er destroy.

XI.

Of noble birth,—daughter of Tamaned,
Alike for courage, strength, and counsel famed;
The most renowned of the illustrious dead
In Indian legend and tradition named;
Whose mighty deeds heroic souls inflamed,
And o'er his tribe a matchless lustre threw,
That long the brave inspired, the faltering shamed,—
No glory but her sire's she deemed as true,
And in its inspiration, pride, and spirit grew.

XII.

Yet trained and disciplined in Nature's laws,
'Mid birds and flowers in Nature's nursery,
Whose spirit is the fountain, substance, cause
Of all ideal life and beauty, she
From artifice, deceit, and fashion free,
Had grown as grow the lilies of the field,
In faultless taste and sweet simplicity;
In perfect health, illumined, crowned, and sealed
With beauty, virtue, truth, in Nature's soul concealed.

XIII.

Beneath a spreading elm, whose branches swept
The ground, her infancy was nursed. Here hung
In the cool summer shadows, while she slept,
Her tiny hammock by the breezes swung
And branches tossed; nursed as the oriole's young,
That built its netted hammock o'er her own,
And 'mid the leaves from morn till evening sung.
Thus had her life begun, and thus had grown,
And naught but nature's freedom, music, gladness known.

XIV.

All her expressions were from Nature drawn,
As those of tinted blossoms from the light,—
The willow's grace, the cloudless morning's dawn,
The laughter of the brooks, the swallow's flight,
The robin's burst of song, the exquisite
Mixed colorings and forms of flowers and leaves,
The wave's soft whisperings, the glances bright
Of rippling streams, the instinct that conceives
The rose's tints and dress, and oriole's hammock weaves.

XV.

As seen in prophet's dream the angels climb
A ladder, step by step the soul ascends.
Our immortality is nursed in time,
And dawns as morning light with darkness blends.
Each noble aim in heavenly glory ends;
And though the spirit struggle into birth
With sighs and tears, yet even sorrow tends,
Alike with purest joys of priceless worth,
To point the way of life, and lure the soul from earth.

XVI.

But first, howe'er so sweet our life may be,
Ere we to heaven aspire, the germs I ween
Of thoughts that live to immortality,
To us are given,—conceived from some unseen
And conscious presences that intervene
God's spirit and our own, and which impart
From him the quickening life, the golden sheen
Of heavenly bright ideals to the heart,—
Nurture the good and true therein, the evil thwart.

XVII.

So now, while thus scarce conscious she looks down
Into her mirrored face and sorrowing eyes,
And sees encircled by a starry crown
Her lustrous head, dimly there seem to rise—
As angels come sometimes in earthly guise
To guide the troubled to a peaceful fold,
Or point the weary to a heavenly prize—
Visions of glory, coronets of gold,
Love perfected through grief, and crowned with joys untold.

XVIII.

Though not forgot, 'twas long before, and when
In trial's hour sorrow in perfect love
Was swallowed up, these visions came again;
When faith in tears and grief for victory strove;
Nor vainly, for a crown in jewels wove
Appeared,—a light in which the sun
Grows dark; a joy all earthly joys above,—
Through sacrifice an endless glory won.
For thus are heaven on earth, and life in death begun.

PRELUDE TO CANTO SECOND.

THE INFINITE.

I.

A TRINITY in all things there must be,
For two straight lines cannot enclose a space.
All things are one, and One is All in Three,
Who doth all things within himself embrace.
Whether condition, matter, mind, or place,
Triune must all things be, and all things one;
And as the rainbow's colors interlace
And blend in white, so Father, Spirit, Son,—
Apart, Truth, Life, and Light,—when joined, are God alone.

II.

And as of every trinity each part
A substance is, each also is threefold
And infinite. And so where'er we start,
Or whatsoe'er direction move, behold
A limitless succession is unrolled !—
In increase or decrease, in great or small,
In time or space, changes, forms new or old,
Unseen or seen, mental or physical,—
Without a first or last, boundless, eternal all !

III.

The Infinite ! in this all mysteries
Are swallowed up. It is each reason why,
Each source and sequence. Question, doubt, surprise,
In its conception end. Philosophy
Founded therein alone can satisfy
All queries, solve all problems, and inspire
The purpose, effort, hope that never die.
All things are possible, and ever higher
May souls ascend and grow in limitless desire.

IV.

Things seem to end indeed, but only change ;
For infinite are forms, conditions too ;
And those decompositions that estrange
The spirit from the body, and undo
Organic forms, are meant but to renew
Or change them for the better or the worse,
According to their state. It must be true
That all things are eternal, for their source
Is in the Infinite, and thitherward their course.

V.

There is no end and no beginning. Hence,
Effects and causes we call ultimate,
Or final, are but relative in sense,
Not positive, as things called small or great,
And differ only in degree or state.
They are no more in mystery involved
Than causes and effects immediate.
Effect and cause are naturally solved,—
All things from precedent conditions are evolved.

VI.

But while all parts are infinite in one
Or many qualities, as length, and height,
And breadth, or substance, time, and space, yet none
Is infinite in all things. Yet as white
Is one and all the colors of the light,
So of existences there is an All—
A One in whom all trinities unite—
That comprehends each faction great and small,
And which Existence, God, Wisdom, and Love we call.

VII.

The Infinite of infinities is he,
The God of gods, the All in all, the Whole
Of consciousness in being, One in three,
Nature of natures, Love of loves, the Soul
Of souls, the Life of lives. In his control
Is every law or truth. In him alone
Is freedom limitless,—the unreached goal
Of infinite progressions. All things own
His power, passive, impassive, conscious, or unknown.

VIII.

Thus the great problem of existences,
By Kear in years gone by, was solved for me.
When this conception once our minds can seize,—
Of infinite progressions,—then the key
We have of progress and philosophy.
But each idea of limits is a dream,
A myth, a phantom of a mystery.
Of infinites degrees all finites seem,—
Circles in circles, links in endless chains we deem.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

One morning aged Tamaned awoke
From troubled dreams and restless, fevered sleep,
And with uplifted face did thus invoke
The Spirit of the skies: "Great Oki, keep
My breath. Pauguk is near, and o'er me creep
Chill shadows. Oh! make known the medicine
That heals our sin and grief; the counsels deep
Of our traditions teach, and each design
Unfold, that in thy glory may my spirit shine.

II.

Fasting, that day he spent in prayer within
His wigwam ; and in melancholy mood,
As one in penitence for some great sin,
When darkness came he sought the solitude
Of a deep valley in the lonely wood
On the lake-shore, to gaze into the face
Unveiled, starlit, of Oki's soul, and brood
Alone on life and death, on time and space ;
But heard no spirit voices whispering words of peace.

III.

Behind Poemotunck's hills where life begun,
Quickly the crescent moon its brightness hides.
"Thus quickly," mused the chief, "our race is run ;
Thus fade our camp-fires. As the river glides
Past swiftly, bearing on its ceaseless tides
The withered autumn leaves, once fresh and green,
So death sweeps us away, and naught besides
Our voiceless dust and grass-grown graves is seen,—
Glory and life become as if they ne'er had been.

IV.

"And O Ponemah, the Hereafter, where,
Tradition says, our life begins and ends;
That for the brave great Oki doth prepare
Homes in the sun, and ever there defends
Them from all evil spirits; thither sends
The spirits of the birds to sing all day
Around their wigwams, and restores the friends
That death's o'erflowing torrents swept away,—
Art thou a dream? And do we vainly hope and pray?

V.

"And if there be a world unseen, I fear
The Happy Hunting-Grounds are not for me.
Must I forever know that they are near,
And yet forbid their sunny vales to see?
Never from spirit wounds or dangers free?
What meant the serpent's hiss and flaming eye,
When in my dreams I vainly seemed to flee,
And seek to cross, as other braves who die,
Its slippery, slimy body, stretched from earth to sky?

VI.

"And whence that voice, so sweet, yet comfortless,
As of a passing spirit on the wing?
That whispered 'Oki pities thy distress,
And would thy spirit to his wigwam bring,
Where it is always sunshine, always spring;
Where through green forests thou may'st ever roam,
Or rest in peace by fountains murmuring;
But only those who solve life's problem come—
The spirits truly wise and brave—unto this home.'"

VII.

While thus the chieftain muses, in the vale
The mingling streams low lamentations make,
Blending their voices with the distant wail
Of Wawonaissa wafted o'er the lake.
The light waves, too, with ceaseless sobbings break
Upon the lonely shore, while breezes sigh
Among the leaves, and low, sad whisperings wake,—
Voices it seemed of evil augury,
As of a multitude of spirits passing by.

VIII.

And he, called the Strong-hearted, wept; yet fear
Could never enter heart so strong and brave.
Not Pauguk's spirit that he deemed near,
Nor contemplations of a voiceless grave,
Could aught of terror for the chieftain have.
As noble natures will, so he bewailed
A life misspent. His earthly glory gave
No trust in the Hereafter, nor availed
To crown with peace his life, which now he deemed had failed.

IX.

Had failed? God pity that impassioned soul
Who, in the consciousness these words express,
His life misspent, hath reached his earthly goal!
When for his follies there seems no redress;
And e'en the triumphs others count success,
Whether of peace or war, of church or state,
Though crowned with fame and riches, cease to bless;
For briefly these such spirits can elate,
And none in earthly fountains heavenly thirstings sate.

X.

But count no soul as lost who still can feel
Within his throbbing breast the faintest thrill
Of truths and aspirations that reveal
The Spirit's conscious strivings; for until
We lose the power, and cease to work and will
The will of God, revealed in law and love,
All things are possible to us, and still
We have the promises of things above;
May ever hope and strive till life victorious prove.

XI.

"Not here," said Kear, "nor in the long Hereafter,
Oki forbids one who would live to live;
Nor keeps a suffering soul from joy and laughter.
All that one will accept doth Oki give;
And each who will can e'er his life retrieve;
For law and love are one, and though we die,
We yet may live, if we his truth receive.
Souls sink or rise alike eternally,
For depths below are deep as heaven is high."

XII.

And when I queried, "How can law and love
Be one?" he said, "Law is God's love expressed,
And like all good comes down from heaven above.
In it are strength and health, are peace and rest.
'Tis justice, mercy, life; but if transgressed,
We lose the power it gives. By it we live;
Without it die. No spirit can be blessed
But in the law. By it doth God forgive,—
Of sin, obedience is the sole alternative.

XIII.

"By law what we call miracles are wrought,—
Even life from death, and righteousness from sin;
Health from disease, order from chaos brought.
By this alone, by labors wrought therein,
Through faith in God, courage, and discipline,
Are lasting happiness and glory won.
Of every ill a healing medicine,
It comes from God as light springs from the sun,—
Of wisdom, virtue, truth, the sole criterion.

XIV.

"He who fulfils the law, with God is one,
And all God's power is able to command.
He is his Word, his Priest, his Heir, his Son,
And crowned with glory shall forever stand,
The Way, the Truth, the Life, at God's right hand;
A man, but God, for God is man in kind,—
The sum of all intelligences, and
Of infinite progressions; is defined
Of men the Man, of words the Word, of minds the Mind."

XV.

Footsteps upon the shore the chieftain hears!
And quick withdraws to deeper shadows nigh;
And soon a man dimly discerned appears,—
Now stopping, now approaching leisurely,
Until his form, outlined on lake and sky,—
Slender, of middle height, of modest mien;
Of natural, unconscious dignity;
Of supple strength and languid grace,—is seen.
'Twas Nepanet, who long his messenger had been.

XVI.

He seemed engaged in strange soliloquies,
Or rather talks with Nature's spirit there.
Now he inquires, and now he makes replies;
Now listens long to voices in the air;
Now seems of unseen presences aware,—
Of solemn whisperings in his inmost soul,—
Bowing his face as one in silent prayer;
Then through his breast a seeming rapture stole,
At which he leaped and laughed in joy beyond control.

XVII.

Sometimes he talked to God as to a friend,
Without reserve and confidentially,
Of what he knew or did not comprehend,
Of what he sought and what he hoped to be,—
A prophet without guile or vanity;
Sometimes to whispering wave or rustling leaf,
With Wawonaissa's plaint in sympathy,
Of yearnings passionate, a hopeless grief,—
His love despised, from which he vainly sought relief.

XVIII.

Amazed the chieftain listened. He had deemed
His messenger a youth of little worth;
And though swift-footed, brave, discreet, he seemed
Devoid of inspirations that bring forth
Heroic deeds. Only in games of mirth,
Sometimes the chase, or works effeminate,
Would he engage. A jossakeed by birth,
His father's arts he did not cultivate;
Nor did the warrior's deeds of fame his soul elate.

XIX.

At other times no doubt the chief had smiled
At what he deemed weak eccentricities;
For men in all conditions are beguiled,
As we, by artful ways, and deem as wise
The vanities that serve but to disguise
The truthful spirit Nature's Soul inspires,—
And which are counted proper dignities;
But in whose chains perish our best desires,
Religion languisheth, and genius soon expires.

XX.

But now, when Nepanet has gone, a light
Seems dawning slowly on his darkened mind ;
Faintly discerned, but which reveals to sight,
Dimly, as yet in shadowy forms outlined,
The truths to which he had before been blind,—
That God is found but in simplicity,
In faith and trust that leave all doubts behind ;
That worldly glories with the body die,
And exaltation comes but of humility.

XXI.

'Tis artifice, 'tis things unnatural,
The letters lacking spirit, that destroy
The spirit of all truth ; and which enthrall
Society, religion, and alloy
And poison all the fountains of our joy.
The church of Christ, once free and catholic,
Simple and natural, is now the toy
Of fashion, or of dogmatist the freak,
Who counts all who deny his creed as heretic.

XXII.

But God forbid that I should be betrayed
Into a morbid, vain misanthropy,—
I whose chief glory is that I was made
A minister of Him who died for me;
Who would unfold the true philosophy
As taught by nature's prophet, priest, and seer;
Alike regardless of the sophistry
Of worldly wise who all religion jeer,
Or dogmatist's conceit, or pious bigot's sneer.

PRELUDE TO CANTO THIRD.

DREAMS.

I.

Man is a spirit and an animal,
Each separate, complete, a trinity
Of natures. And the same is true of all
Organic forms—even of worlds. Each tree,
Insect, and bird hath an affinity,—
A corresponding spirit that doth give
And have a light therewith in harmony.
Hence all organic forms are sensitive,
Are conscious in degree, and double lives do live.

II.

And all dream dreams,—some fanciful, some real.
Man's always are prophetic,—the expression
Of that which will or may be,—the ideal
Created by his hopes, or the confession
Of secret fears; and often from possession
Of good or evil spirits spring, who through
His truth or falsehood gain accession
To soul and body, either to renew
Or torture,—angel guides or phantoms to pursue.

III.

If fancy, yet are always true in this,
That they reveal conditions of the mind
Or body,—states of suffering or bliss;
For as our state so shall we ever find
Our fancies,—mostly good and bad combined.
A dream, like all things else, must be evolved
From precedent conditions, which, defined
Thereby, are always found involved
With living things; and into these may be resolved—

IV.

Disease or putrefaction into worms;
Sins into serpents. Evil thoughts or deeds
Become transfigured into living forms,—
Demons or reptiles. Thus each evil breeds
Its corresponding spirit; and each feeds
Its nurslings on its own corrupted life.
But as from evil evil, so proceeds
From good each impulse that arouses—rife
With inspirations of true glory—nobler strife.

V.

If real, dreams are what our spirits see,
Remote or near, transpiring; for in sleep
The spirit, conscious still, may wander free.
Such dreams cannot occur in slumbers deep,
But only when, half waking, there do creep
Impressions on our minds exterior
Of inward contemplations. These we keep
In outward memory when waking; for
They come as those which in our outward life occur.

VI.

"Being twofold, our memories are twain,—
The spirit's and the animal's,"—said Kear;
"And each alone impressions can retain
Derived from what occurs in its own sphere.
In waking hours the spirit acteth here,
The animal subjected to its will;
And then its joy and pain, its hope and fear,
Its thought and life, are outward; and until
The body dies doth here its purposes fulfil.

VII.

"Our loss of consciousness in sleep is but
In seeming; for the soul's activities
Continue, though in slumbers they are shut
Out from the body, in which memory lies
Dormant, impressionless, as then the eyes
And mind of flesh,—each but an instrument
Of fleshly sense until the body dies.
This memory, therefore, cannot represent
In sleep the soul's emotions, doings, or intent."

VIII.

I asked Kear why man was created twain?
And how? and he replied: "No beings are
Created. All are born and grown,—attain
Their spheres by evolutions. All things bear
Their kind,—even our thoughts. Spirits prepare
Their own surroundings, worlds, and states,
Bodies, affinities, and homes, and share
With their own kind its loves and hates,
Its promises and fears, its punishments and fates.

IX.

"As isolation is impossible,
Each has its contacts, and through these come all
Sensations. Each is a receptacle,
A home and habitation natural
Of that which of itself is typical
Or similar in nature. Perfect touch
Between two things makes them identical
In form and nature,—both as one. And such
Are soul and body, though in substance differing much.

X.

"Souls pre-exist, and in variety
Are infinite. The first man is begun
An animal, with which, through harmony
Therewith in nature made in life as one,
Is joined another spirit; whence is grown
A second man, to whom, if he hath striven
To know the truth, though in corruption sown,
Through faith in what is right, the power is given
To put on incorruption and ascend to heaven.

XI.

"All growth is through some correspondence. For
Each germ, since souls in kind are infinite,
There is a spirit,—one that must concur
Therewith in life through harmony,—unite
In form and nature; and, though opposite
In substance, yet doth correspond thereto
In character, and with it must be knit.
Thus germs conceive, and thus are caused to grow,
And more and more a secret life and spirit show.

XII.

"The nature of a thing its spirit is,
And gives it form, expression, character.
Two corresponding worlds there are to this
In which we live, which good and evil here
Do represent. And these are very near,
In partial contact, though invisible.
So when we die our spirits will appear
Unto themselves in the same world to dwell;
And yet have been translated to a heaven or hell."

XIII.

I asked him how first germs originate?
"They neither do," he said, "nor did begin,
Though changing ever with their changing state.
Men, animals, and plants do differ in
Degree of growth alone; hence man through sin
May be degraded to a brute, or rise
Through increased correspondence till he win—
Made one with God—an entrance to the skies;
Wherein, the law fulfilled, the body never dies."

CANTO THIRD.

I.

Quick as an oriole glancing on the wing,
When Tamaned returned, his daughter sprung
To meet him, and—a moment faltering,
As conscious that some shadow o'er him hung—
Around his neck her amber arms she flung.
And when he bent to hers his sorrowing face,
Speechless, she saw his grief, and clung
With tears and kisses to his long embrace.
But human sympathies cannot such grief efface.

II.

At last he led her to his wigwam door,
And bringing there the pictured mat that she
Had worked for him, he spread it o'er
The threshold. "Sit thou here, daughter," said he;
"No more in shadows will I hide from thee
My spirit wounds. Since Pauguk bore away
Thy mother, Light of Noon, sweet Seetsebe,
Thou hast to me been as the light of day,—
The Crystal Stone in whom thy mother's soul I see.

III.

"Why Oki took her spirit I knew not,
But thought the more for glory I should strive,
That I the sorrow from my heart might blot,
And crowned therewith I might at last arrive
Where she had gone, and there again revive
The blissful love that here had been so brief.
For I was taught that Oki doth deprive
Us of our joys that we may find relief
From spirit wounds in fame, and hide therein our grief.

IV.

"How well I strove thou knowest, for thy life
Hath grown in years and beauty with my name.
Thy infant ears first caught the sound of strife
From winds that rocked thy cradle, and which came
From fields of blood where first I strove for fame.
But all my glories, all my victories won,
Have brought me only shadows, grief, and shame.
I slew Oneida's chief, the Heart of Stone;
And he who now would wed my daughter is his son!"

V.

Up sprung Eniskin as a frightened fawn
That hears approach the gray wolf's stealthy tread.
Trembling she stood, and, as the sky at dawn
Of lurid day, her face ablaze, she said:
"Is this thy shame? that thou wouldst have me wed
Oneida's chief? That thou didst slay his sire,
The Heart of Stone, the cruel chief who shed
Thy brother's blood, and tribute did require,
Must I be given to soothe the son's avenging ire?"

VI.

The chieftain's heart exulted, and his breast
Thrilled with the fiery rapture of the past.
But for the time his purpose he repressed,
And to the ground in seeming sorrow cast
His eyes. Sadly he spoke: "Daughter, at last
The shadow of my grief, which, dark as night,
Broods o'er me, touches thee, and as the blast
Of Wabun's icy breath, whose touch doth blight
The tender bud of spring-time, doth thy spirit smite.

VII.

"But fear not, nor account my shame as this,
That I would tribute of my daughter give
To purchase peace or life. The thought dismiss.
No lips shall e'er touch thine while I yet live
Thou canst not love; and no alternative
But death for thee or me I e'er shall seek
Of baseness. Honor shall at least survive,
Though glory perish. Listen while I speak,
Nor deem my heart be melted, nor my spirit weak.

VIII.

"For know thou must my spirit's wounds; and thy
Soft hand shall pluck therefrom the arrows, and
With tender touch the medicine apply.
My glory is departing, for I stand
Alone of all our chiefs to guard the land.
The fierce Oneida threatens on the north,
But may grant peace for tribute of thy hand;
And from the rising sun a race comes forth
To drive us from our homes, our heritage by birth.

IX.

"Vain, therefore, is that glory that I thought
Would give me entrance to the blest abode
Where she I love hath gone,—the glory sought
In misspent years of conquest, strife, and blood.
The freedom, too, is vain from tribute owed
The Heart of Stone, for which so many died;
For soon may come upon us as a flood
Oneida's braves with many tribes allied,
When we must flee or die, except thou be his bride.

X.

"Our sachems on the shore of the Great Sea
Will now no more contend, and e'en would sell
Unto the Pale-face land and liberty;
And we alone, who on the mountains dwell,
Are left Oneida's fury to repel.
Yet e'en a greater grief afflicts my heart,
And which to thee I scarcely dare to tell,—
From thee, sweet daughter, Oki bids me part;
And soon my spirit must on its long journey start.

XI.

"Ten summers since, when I came here to dwell
On lands reconquered in the bloody strife
In which Oneida's chief was slain, there fell
A dark, mysterious shadow on my life.
One morning, when I woke from slumbers rife
With dreams of glory, lo! his scalp was gone.
My scalp-lock, too, dissevered with his knife,
Was stolen; but by whom the deed was done—
By enemy, or friend, or Jeebi—ne'er was known.

XII.

"Though on a couch of leaves beside me, wrapt
In robes of snowy fur, my child was sleeping,—
Eight moons of leaves you'd seen,—no harm had hapt
To thee I found, when round us had been creeping
The stealthy shadow. But you had been weeping;
For tears, the first you'd shed, lay on your face.
And from your hand a rose-bud you were keeping,
When you lay down, was gone. Each year apace
Hath grown upon me since the shame of my disgrace.

XIII.

"And day by day the shadow on my soul
Hath deepened. What the substance was of that
Strange, stealthy presence which that night had stole
Into my wigwam, noiseless as a bat
Around us flitting, I knew not. My fate
I thought involved therein; but its intent,
Of love or wrath, I could not penetrate;
Though now I deem it by great Oki sent,—
A warning of approaching death and punishment.

XIV.

"Nor is this all, nor yet the worst. Last night
A vision came in troubled sleep to show
Me that my glories are in Oki's sight
But war-paint on my face, or as the glow
Of fireflies' wings, or sunset clouds that throw
A fading lustre on our darkening day;
And that on those alone he doth bestow
The Happy Hunting-Grounds, who learn the way
To read traditions rightly, and his will obey.

XV.

"This was my dream: Pauguk appeared, and then
Darkness came o'er me as I felt the clutch
Of icy fingers at my throat; and when
My breathings ceased, and I was dead,—for such
I seemed, though conscious still,—I felt the touch
As of a chilly breath upon my brow.
Then slowly dawning light appeared, and much,
When objects rose to view, I marvelled how
Ponemah should appear as this world seemeth now.

XVI.

"For I could see, as through a murky mist,
Forest and stream familiar to my eyes.
That world seemed just like this,—except I missed
The works of living men. To my surprise
This sunny vale in which our garden lies
Was all o'ergrown with briers as of yore,
When first I built my wigwam here. The skies
Were starless and of sombre hue; but o'er
Poemotunck shone a light I ne'er had seen before,—

XVII.

"A setting sun scarce larger than a star,
That shone through chilly mists with flickering light,
As camp-fire in the forest seen afar;
And when at last it slowly sunk from sight
Behind Poemotunck's wooded crests, a night
Came on, damp, rayless, pitiless,—so dark
All shadows were effaced. In cold affright
Shivering, I groped around, but found no mark
To guide my steps,—no path, no gleam of glow-worm's spark.

XVIII.

"I heard in an impenetrable gloom
Shrieks, groanings, mutterings, as if like mine
Spirits innumerable bewailed their doom.
Some in low lamentations did repine;
Some wailed as if in horrid discipline
Of torture. Long my terrors to restrain
I strove, but sunk at last o'ercome, supine
On the cold earth. Long hoping, but in vain,
For light, I prayed for death, but could not die again.

XIX.

"The seeming tortures of that hideous night
I cannot picture. Writhing on the ground
In agony I lay. Beasts hid from sight
Snapped at my body. Vultures standing round
Pecked at my sightless eyes. I heard the sound
Of croaking reptiles,—felt their clammy feet
Upon my shrinking flesh, while serpents bound
My limbs in slimy folds. Fiends to complete
My tortures did my groans with hideous mockings greet.

XX.

"O daughter, though a dream, full well I know
This vision pictured truthfully the state
Of souls by sins diseased, and did foreshow
The end of earthly pride. Thus terminate
Our deeds of fame and glory that elate
Our selfish souls with momentary joys.
Such horrors, darkness, agonies await
All who are lured to follow these decoys
Of vanity the Evil Manito employs.

XXI.

"But think not I have ceased to hope; for still
I live; and though my strength be gone, and few
My days remaining, I may learn the will
Of Oki, and my wasted life renew;
So that when finally I bid adieu
To earth, in real glory I may come
Unto a world of light. If what is true
I learn to love, Oki will take me home,
Where neither cares nor griefs are known, nor night,
nor gloom.

XXII.

"For Oki doth not count me lost I ween;
For light appeared at last. A star arose,
Passing from east to west, of silvery sheen,—
A guiding star which did a path disclose
Bright gleaming as a moon-lit stream that flows
Through a dark wilderness; a path that led
Up to Poemotunck's loftiest peak, where glows
The light of setting suns. 'Great Tamaned,
Arise, follow the star,' some unseen spirit said.

XXIII.

"At first I thought my gentle Seetsebe
Had come upon this path of light, so sweet
That spirit voice. Thrilled with such ecstasy
As one alone can feel who springs to greet
The loved and lost he thought no more to meet,—
Escaped from night and tortures endless deemed,—
I burst my serpent bonds, and to my feet
I leaped. That momentary joy, though dreamed,
Than my first glory won a greater rapture seemed.

XXIV.

"But it was vain, I was alone,—except
Perhaps some unseen presence lingering near,
Or shadowy reptile forms that slowly crept
Off into darkness. Yet my way seemed clear
Up to the skies; and as a hunted deer
I wildly on that starlit pathway fled.
But now fresh terrors rise, for lo! appear
Pursuing fast the phantoms of the dead,—
Spirits of those whose blood I had in battle shed.

XXV.

"Never in waking hours had I e'er quailed
Before my foes; but then when glancing back
I saw this phantom host, my courage failed.
Frantic with fear I fled, while on my track,
With savage yells, jeers, howls demoniac,
It followed eagerly, and soon my path
Beset,—all thronging round me as a pack
Of hungry wolves. Alas! such end in wrath
And fear the way of strife and blood-bought glory hath.

XXVI.

"As one who runs a gauntlet of his foes
I fled; but finally, wearied with jeers
And cruel mockings, staggering 'neath the blows
Of war-clubs and the thrusts of poisoned spears,
As wounded bison savagely from fears
And flight I turned to bay; and lo! there stood
The Heart of Stone, with scowls and horrid leers,
Confronting me,—his face streaked with the blood
That, when I took his scalp, did from his skull exude.

XXVII.

"But when he saw me fiercely turned to bay,
Confronting him as in the past, the ghost,
With terror stricken, shrieking fled away
Into the forest till in shadows lost;
And with him vanished all the phantom host.
With equal terror stricken, I too turned
To flee again, and found myself almost
Unto the mountain-side, where I discerned
A flowing stream, for which my thirsting spirit burned.

XXVIII.

"Onward I pressed, while brighter gleamed the star,
To reach the mount. I saw a multitude
Of spirits wearily reclining there
Beside the flowing stream; who, when they viewed
Me coming, as with sudden fear imbued,
Drew back; and I could hear them whisper: 'See
Approach some mighty chief with blood imbrued,—
'Tis Tamaned, the Lenni-Lenape!'
And panic-stricken at my name, all fled from me.

XXIX.

"The stream flowed from the mountain-side into
A pebbly basin. Eagerly to taste
The brimming flood, burning with thirst I threw
Me down; but ere my parched lips I placed
To the cool waters, back I sprung in haste,
Aghast at my own image! for therein
I saw my spirit as it was,—defaced,
Defiled, distorted, hideous through sin
And vanities that once my joy and boast had been.

XXX.

"Just as I had been buried, painted, plumed,
Armed and arrayed for war, as oft before,
I saw myself,—ghastly as if exhumed
With all the foulness of decay. Worms o'er
My painted face had crept. Each scalp I bore
Suspended from my belt did seem a braid
Of writhing snakes. The mantle that I wore—
The one on which my deeds I have portrayed—
Appeared defaced with blood, moth-eaten and decayed.

XXXI.

"I charge thee, daughter, when I die let not
My chiefs and warriors bury me thus drest.
For glories perish as their trophies rot;
And thus arrayed no soul can ever rest
In peace, or reach the wigwams of the blest.
I soon shall burn each symbol of my fame,—
My robe and belt on which I have expressed
My boastings vain; also my chiefest shame,—
The gory scalp-locks which my deeds of blood proclaim.

XXXII.

"Yet mirrored in the waters pebble-urned
I saw the star, in which, though it revealed
My soul's deformity, a spirit burned,
Conscious, o'erflowing with a light that healed
My wounds, and all my sin and shame concealed;
For in the rippling waters multiplied,
It seemed to spread into a starry shield,
And then into a plume and robe divide,
When I appeared transformed,—a spirit glorified.

XXXIII.

"A momentary gleaming meant to show,
Not what I was, but what I might have been,
Or may be still, should I e'er come to know
The teachings of tradition, and begin
My life anew. There was a glory in
The star,—a hidden mystery, which could
I solve, I should not fail again to win
An entrance to the skies; nor longer would
The spirit of my love, long lost, my arms elude.

XXXIV.

"Next I remember standing on the height.
Before me yawned a gulf impassable,
Whose depths in darkness were concealed from sight,—
And bottomless I ween; for when there fell
Therein a soul accurst, I could not tell
From any echoings returned his fate;
But fainter grew his shrieks till in that hell
Of darkness lost. This gulf doth separate
The world of sin and darkness from the blissful state—

XXXV.

"The Happy Hunting-Grounds which I beheld,
Countless as stars, upon the sky unrolled;
Illumined by a brightness that excelled
The morning's dawn,—in colors manifold
As rainbow-tinted clouds; a shining wold,—
Plains, mountains, which seemed floating as green isles
On boundless seas of light. There we are told
In our traditions some fresh joy beguiles
Each hour, the sun ne'er sets, and endless summer smiles.

XXXVI.

"The starlit path of souls, the Milky Way—
The same I had been following—appeared
Strangely transformed. A writhing serpent lay
Across the mighty gulf, which, when I neared,
With flaming eyes and jaws wide open, reared
Its head and hissed at me menacingly.
Some it allowed to pass, and then I feared
The more the writhing, slimy path to try;
For many slipped and fell with shrieks of agony.

XXXVII.

"In my distress I thought thou cam'st to me,
And quick, the serpent to appease, didst cast
Thyself into its jaws, when instantly—
For I seemed paralyzed, and stood aghast,
Powerless to save—my messenger sprang past,
And caught your hands outstretched most lovingly
To him. But still the serpent held you fast,
Yet seemed to change, as I in agony
Awoke, into a starry pathway to the sky."

PRELUDE TO CANTO FOURTH.

THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.

I.

As men and animals are of one kind,
So also men and angels. Hence a soul
That dwelleth here with fleshly body joined
May have come up or down; for of one whole
A part is every world or state,—a goal
Of progress from below, and yet a hell
Of degradation from above,—a dole
Or joy by contrast. With our own may dwell
Spirits once beasts, or angels who from glory fell.

II.

And yet a human germ may be so pure
That God's Word personal be joined thereto;
And when developed be the portraiture,
Though human still, of God's own soul, and show
The perfect wisdom, love, and life that flow
From heavenly fountains; may command the power
Of God, and by a touch the life renew
Of dying souls. And such was Jesus, our
Redeemer,—one with God, and yet than man no more.

III.

He is our God; for he who of our kind
Is greatest is our God, nor can we see
Nor know another, for no man can find
Out God. There is an All, but cannot be
An end or limit of infinity.
Apart from God in man, God is a mere
Abstraction as a personality;
For he is All, and so cannot appear
To us, nor comprehended be, remote nor near.

IV.

And if God were simply the highest grade
Of being, and not All, then he
Would be the end of being,—would be made
With limits,—an impossibility;
For end implies a limit. There must be
Something beyond. The first *and* last is God,—
That is, the whole. Of each, in its degree,
Existing spirit is he the abode,—
So far as wisdom, love, order, and truth are showed.

V.

Jesus fulfilled the law in love; that is,
He showed how law and love are one, and give
Enduring life. He is the Word; for his
Humanity expressed all truths that live
In God. He is our Saviour,—could forgive
All sin, because by his self-sacrifice
He taught the charity that doth revive
In sinful breasts all noble sympathies,
And e'en the life of dying souls immortalize.

VI.

He is the Perfect Man ; by which we mean
That all the truths of God—of All in One—
Harmonious, were in his nature seen,
As in a single ray of light the sun
In fulness is revealed. In him alone,
The only perfect man of all our race,
The perfect God in fulness is made known.
In him through all his teachings we may trace
The Conscious Deity, and meet God face to face.

VII.

He is the Son of Man,—born of the flesh,
Allied in life to a pure human germ ;
Existing previously, yet born afresh
Into this world, that with our souls infirm,
Suffering, and sinful, he might pass the term
Of our allotted life. Born into earth,
That all who will their lives to his conform,
Partaking of his spirit, bringing forth
His works, may with his soul attain a heavenly birth.

VIII.

He is the Son of God,—of sons the Son;
Only-begotten, for the first-born soul,
In whom Existence' Self in full is shown.
In him, the first and last, is found the goal
Of human progress. Of all truth the full
Expression; of all virtues cardinal—
Faith, patience, hope, and charity—the whole;
Our only God revealed as personal,
And from eternity begotten of the All.

IX.

He is our Mediator,—one with God,
And one with man; for coming from above,
He hath with us the path of suffering trod,
That we through him might know the Father's love
Which doth all sorrow, sin, and death remove.
The more we learn to love the less we die,
For love atones for sin. Hence Jesus strove,
Made perfect through his sufferings, that we
Should conquer sin, and death, and hell, through charity.

X.

His is the spirit of self-sacrifice,
Whereby forgetting self, seeking to save
The lost, we gain the All. No soul can rise
But by this spirit. Each is but the slave
Of sin and self, and diggeth his own grave,
Who doth not give as he receives; for none
Can live unto himself. But if we crave
The good of all, in love our life begun,
In love it lives and grows till we and God are one.

XI.

"But Kear," said I, "explain this mystery,—
How doth a soul for wrong obtain redress,
Who by that wrong doth suffer till he die?"
"Through charity," said he. "Each wrong will bless
The injured one; each suffering, too, unless
Evil for evil he returns through pride,
And thus in his own wrong should acquiesce.
Each sinful soul must be by suffering tried
Ere it can rest in peace, and in God's love abide."

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

THE spirit of self-sacrifice for good
In human breasts a Saviour's presence ever
Betokens. This is true whate'er our mood,
Joyous or sad,—when we unite or sever
The bonds of sympathy in our endeavor
To share distress or nobly to endure
A separation which we know can never
In this life end. Of love the spirit pure,
Through suffering it doth to perfect peace inure.

II.

Such was the spirit which that vision bright
Eniskin saw—the starry coronet—
Disclosed ; discerned but as a struggling light
In darkness dawning ; seen through tears, and yet
The mystic crown, the secret amulet
Of love divine, which in its heavenly sheen
Quencheth all evils which our paths beset ;
Begotten always of our griefs I ween,
As Oki's face, starlit, is but in darkness seen.

III.

Till now her life had been a blissful dream,
Her way a path of sunshine, beauty, song ;
Or as a sparkling, merry, mountain stream,
That like a child at play doth linger long
In sunny vales the birds and flowers among.
But suddenly her sky had darkened. Pride,
Which first her soul, unconscious of all wrong,—
Concealed, as poisons in sweet blossoms hide,—
Had filled with fear and doubt, had now with grief allied.

IV.

A voice thrilled on her ear—"Eniskin!"—low
And sweet, but firm and manly. Startled to
Self-consciousness, a deeper crimson glow
Her face suffusing, shyly she withdrew
The farther from the shore her light canoe,—
Which, as a humming-bird poised on the wing,
Obeyed an instant thought,—and then anew
Her wonted, playful mood recovering,
Returned, and lightly on the moonlit strand did spring.

V.

"O Nepanet," she said, "my father seeks
Thee since the dawning. Where hast thou been straying?"
And then with downcast eyes and glowing cheeks,
Her trembling voice her secret grief betraying,
She faltered and stood mute, although essaying
To utter what her pride would still conceal;
Yearning for sympathy and yet delaying,—
For hopeless seems the love she would reveal,
But which doth now the more for sympathy appeal.

VI.

Alas! there might have been on earth—but then
We do not know what is for us the best
Always; and often with the angels, when
Their arms are in the darkness round us pressed,
Wrestle till overcome, ere we are blessed—
On earth a blissful life, could Nepanet
But only then her sympathies have guessed,
Or in his wonted mood her shyness met;
But he had come to meet and part, and then forget.

VII.

For deeming love with pride could ne'er prevail,
Himself unworthy also to possess,
He all that day in lone Ewayea's vale
Had wooed the spirit of forgetfulness,
Where streams with constant murmurings repress
The hopeless longings of the soul, until
O'ercome at last, forgetful of distress,
He bowed submissive to great Oki's will,
And felt the joy of sacrifice his bosom thrill.

VIII.

Oh! there are souls who give but ne'er receive
Of love on earth as true and pure as heaven;
Who earth's redemption, progress, hope achieve,—
Earth's prophecy and faith, of truth the leaven,
Incarnate here to mortal sufferings given;
Ambitious, bound by earthly limitations;
Impassioned, thirsting, yet have vainly striven,
Compelled to loveless lives and humble stations,
To satisfy on earth their heavenly aspirations.

IX.

Vainly indeed! for truth and righteousness
Can brook nor fellowship nor compromise
With wrong and pride; nor through the tears and stress
Of other lives to earthly glory rise.
And wisely each distinction, honor, prize
Of earth is deemed but vanity and shame,
Attained through selfish pride, whate'er its guise,—
A seeming wisdom, patriotic flame,
Or e'en the sanctity of a religious name.

X.

No purer raptures e'er the soul of youth
Inspired than those our hero's bosom thrilled;
Nor breast impassioned with the love of truth
Was e'er with loftier aspirations filled.
Not e'en in cultured life, so called, was chilled
Than his a nobler purpose; but then we
Count nothing merit which we cannot gild
With gold; and truth or love alike must be
With us a matter only of utility.

XI.

But though the root of evil had not grown
By culture with the Lenni-Lenapes,
Nor social crimes and vices e'er been known,
Nor arts refined in legal cruelties,
Whereby the few may dwell in slothful ease,
The masses struggling for their daily bread,—
Thus all enslaved by toil or luxuries,—
Yet with them war alone to honor led,
And Nepanet could not this path of glory tread.

XII.

Hence no distinction counted as success
Could he attain, whereby with honest pride
He could demand, or even would possess,
The hand of one by birth nobly allied,
And who no merit could discern beside
The martial spirit of her noble sire,—
By counsel, courage, glory deified.
And yet a flame, a passionate desire,
A truly martial spirit did his soul inspire.

XIII.

What shall we say then? That Heaven's Soul begets
Such spirits here in wanton cruelty?
Imparts high purposes and then besets
Their lives with obstacles that cannot be
O'ercome? Passion divine, the ecstasy
Of truth and love inspires but to defeat
Each aspiration, hope, and prophecy?
Presents ideals they can ne'er complete,
And hungerings incites with only husks to eat?

XIV.

This would be true indeed, if on the cross
Perished the soul whose willing sacrifice
Of self, of all things here, whate'er the loss,
Revealed the path in which true glory lies;
Who taught that our simplicity is wise,
And human weakness with God's strength endued;
That through humility alone we rise,
And every buffeting, however rude,
If borne with meekness, brings a sweet beatitude.

XV.

But Jesus lives and reigns the Prince of Life,—
Dead, crucified, yet living evermore,
Victorious in love, he rests from strife.
His buffetings, the crown of thorns he wore,
His agony and tears, the cross he bore,
Transfigured, each a glory hath become.
Thus every soul is more than conqueror
Who giveth love for hate, nor doth succumb
To wrong, nor fear, nor doubt, though suffering martyrdom.

XVI.

True, Nepanet at this time had not heard
Of Christ,—of Perfect Man as God Supreme;
Of perfect God incarnate in his Word,—
God's soul expressed in Man. And yet I deem
His inspiration the prophetic dream
Of God with man,—the lamp in moral wreck
And darkness seen, the guiding star, the gleam
Of heavenly light, the purpose naught can check,
The symbol of the order of Melchizedek.

XVII.

All great improvements come by prophecy;
That is, exist at first only in thought,
Inspired through hope, ambition, sympathy;
And when in the imagination wrought,
Are then by toil and sacrifices brought
To light,—incarnate in our work and word.
So as our spirits are by spirits taught,
We may discern the presence of the Lord,
Though of his coming in the flesh we ne'er have heard.

XVIII.

In boyhood, it was thought he'd been bereft
Of father, mother, kindred; that not one
Of many friends and neighbors had been left
To mourn with him; that once when he alone
Was wandering in the woods, had crept upon
The shore of Whispering Wave a stealthy band
Of painted warriors led by Heart of Stone;
And when he had returned at night the land
Was still and desolate by tomahawk and brand.

XIX.

Five years thereafter, when the mighty chief,
Great Tamaned, had built his wigwam near,
The boy was found alone in sullen grief
Beside his kindred's graves. And often here
The chief had come and vainly sought to cheer
Him with the hope and promise that when he
Had grown to manhood and could wield the spear
And tomahawk, his wrongs at last should be
Effaced in the Oneida's blood, their enemy.

XX.

Where a wild, dashing, mountain stream debouched
Upon a sunny agawam, a space
Of odorous meadow grasses, and that touched
The lake below, above the rocky base
Of darkly-wooded Agiocook—place
Of whispering spirits of the pines—he built
His solitary wigwam. Here his face
He veiled, on vengeance brooding ; nor had felt
Thereon the sunlight, lest his heart and purpose melt.

XXI.

Though but a child in years and stature, he
In gloomy meditations had grown old,
And in seclusion reached maturity
Of inward consciousness wherein we hold
Prophetic gifts, and hope and faith unfold
When once inspired in sinful souls on earth.
As when upon the storm-cloud is unrolled
The covenant of promise, so come forth
From darkness hope and faith, and struggle into birth.

XXII.

That God is pleased with sacrifices, made
With purpose to efface our grief or sin,
Men know instinctively, and yet degrade
This noble instinct, making it akin
To motives of revenge, and think to win
A lasting glory by the sacrifice
Of enemies, or even friends; but in
Self-sacrifice alone for truth there lies
The path of glory and an entrance to the skies.

XXIII.

But to the sorrowing soul of Nepanet
The burning lamp, the fiery cloud that shines
In darkness, had not then appeared. As yet,
When he lay sleeping 'neath the whispering pines,
Visions, nor dreams, nor prophecies, nor signs
To him had come; nor still, small voice from heaven,
That all in one God's promises combines,
And is of all true peace and joy the leaven,—
Whispering, "Forgive, and thou shalt also be forgiven."

XXIV.

The Delaware and Iroquois were then
At peace; but Tamaned, with vigilance
That never slumbered, by patrols of men
Still guarded his dominions, lest perchance
His ancient foe should treacherously advance
Upon him unprepared. Ah! little deemed
He then that oft the burning eyes, whose glance
Betrayed a hatred that could ne'er have dreamed
Of mercy or forgiveness, had upon him gleamed.

XXV.

Yet oft, amid the branches that o'erhung
His dwelling, lurked by day a secret foe,
Concealed as stealthy panthers hide among
The leaves; at night into the wigwam slow
And as a shadow creeping; then would go
As silently, the gleaming of his eye
Subdued, but yet unquenched in blood,—his vow
Of vengeance unfulfilled. But finally
Departing with the scalp-lock of his enemy.

XXVI.

In every life there comes a time when God
Reveals his way,—the starlit path that hence
From sin and shame each soul redeemed hath trod,—
Steps unto heaven, a way, a providence
Of good, a trial or temptation, whence
His promises come forth. And all who turn
Thereto, for every loss a recompense
Receive,—in darkness light and joy discern,
And even in infirmities to glory learn.

XXVII.

But ah! how dark at first this way appears!
Its light a single star, or bush of thorns
Burning, but not consumed. The voice one hears
From lips invisible, what most he scorns
Or dreads, doth bid him do; what most adorns
His life in seeming bids to cast away;
And only comforting to him who mourns.
And yet for all who will the voice obey,
The light, however dim, grows into perfect day.

XXVIII.

Up from the lake stirred by the morning breeze—
The morning after Tamaned's disgrace—
A ray of light reflected 'neath the trees
Whose branches round his wigwam interlace,
Bright glinting, shines into the troubled face
Of Nepanet. Upstarting from his sleep,
Sensations, new and sweet, of joy and peace,
A moment thrill his breast. But soon there creep
Therein shame, bitterness, and shadows dark and deep.

XXIX.

With scowling face he quickly turned away,
And with a scornful gesture put aside
Impatiently the merry sunbeam. "Nay,
Thou silver-winged messenger," he cried,
"It must not be,—no joy can e'er abide
With me, my vow still unfulfilled. Begone!
Nor come thou hither more to mock and chide
My shame. Leave me in darkness here alone,—
A bloodless scalp-lock now my boast of glory won."

XXX.

But though repulsed the merry sunbeam left
Behind a happy thought, a questioning—
The first thread woven in the golden weft
Of his philosophy—how everything
In nature could be gay and blossoming,
When in his soul was only bitterness?
How could the birds around his wigwam sing?
The flowers emit their sweets? So pitiless,
Great Oki send the light to mock at his distress?

XXXI.

As in each breast there is some sense of shame,
However weak and selfish it may be,
For petulance and meanness, so there came
In his reacting consciousness that he
Against the light had uttered blasphemy,—
Construing what was good as evil meant.
Whence dawned the first idea of charity
Upon his mind; for surely the intent
Of all God's gifts was love, and all as blessings sent.

XXXII.

Ere yet the sun had risen high, he walked
Forth from the gloomy shadows of the pines
Into the light, and on the meadow talked
With birds and flowers. Thereafter the designs
Of God in nature were his study,—signs
And promises from heaven. The things erewhile
As shame and weakness deemed he made the shrines
Of his devotions; learned to reconcile
God's ways in law and love, and put away all guile.

XXXIII.

Finding that birds sing just as sweetly when
Alone, and think there are no listeners,
He put away all vanity. And then
He saw how sun and moon are ministers
Of light, and thought all true philosophers
Are those who give without return, and find
That in the blessings which each life confers
On others is its glory. To his mind
The Spirit's whisperings were as voices in the wind.

XXXIV.

Thus day by day he grew in sympathy
With Nature, apprehending more and more
Her spirit, wisdom, and simplicity.
And yet, when standing on the moonlit shore
With loved Eniskin, deeming that the hour
Of parting had then come, so long delayed,
An evil shadow touched his soul. His power
Of truth and manly frankness failed. A shade
Of bitterness appeared against her pride arrayed.

XXXV.

"Proud daughter of great Tamaned," he said,
"I fear thou art some secret grief concealing.
Hath darkness suddenly thy sky o'erspread?
Are shadows on thy sunny pathway stealing?
Or dost thou fear I come again appealing
For love thou canst not give? Let not thy heart
Be sad for me. Not even of thy feeling
Of pity am I worthy. Hence apart
I go, where love nor pride can more my purpose thwart."

XXXVI.

"Beware, O Nepanet," Eniskin quick
Replied with flashing eyes and form erect,
"How thou dost to thy chieftain's daughter speak
With mocking words. How couldst thou but expect—
No glory having won—I should reject
Thy love? 'Twere needless thou shouldst bid adieu
To me——" Then suddenly her words were checked
With choking sobs, and in her light canoe,
As swiftly as a swallow o'er the lake she flew,

XXXVII.

Till hid within the shadows of the mountains,
Wooded and dark beyond. Here resting from
Her flight, o'erwhelmed with shame and grief, the fountains
Of bitterness o'erflowed in tears. No room
For reconciliation now; yet whom
But Nepanet can she e'er love?—and he
Can ne'er forgive her bitter words, nor come
Again as oft in days gone by, when she,
While yet afar, would run to meet him joyfully.

XXXVIII.

Shall she return and ask him to forgive
The bitter words she did not mean? But no,—
Her pride forbade. And yet how can she live
Apart from him? How can she let him go
Away forever? Then her father's woe
She called to mind, and her heroic dream
Of sacrifice. How can she e'er bestow
Her hand on one her sire can ne'er esteem,
And who can ne'er the glory of her name redeem?

XXXIX.

Then came a sickening thought, at which her pride
Was changed, and grew into an agony
Of shame,—must she become Oneida's bride?
And yet her father said, except this be
The tribe must perish or its liberty,
For which so many died. In her alone
Resteth the hope of Lenni-Lenape.
Yes, she will for her nation's life atone,—
In her dark eyes a strange unearthly lustre shone.

XL.

Upon the lake a deeper shadow fell.
The moon had set, and with the darkness grew
Within her breast repose,—the mystic spell
Succeeding mortal grief, when we renew
Our strength, and God with courage doth endue
Our souls to meet the final sacrifice.
Ah! little dreamed I, when first rose to view
Her lovely spirit, that those pitying eyes
Had known such grief,—lit with compassion from the skies.

XLI.

I saw her face the first, when, lost beside
Ewayea's whispering waterfall in trance
Of nature's spirit, at one eventide
I rested,—though I may ofttimes perchance
Of her dark eyes before have caught the glance
From starlit fountains,—in the silvery spray
Floating in robes of white, her countenance
Of wondrous brightness. Often since that day
In sylvan paths I've met this angel of my way.

PRELUDE TO CANTO FIFTH.

TEMPTATION.

I.

Volition, or the power to choose the right
Or wrong, dwells in our consciousness. Hence we,
Made in the image of the Infinite,
Self-conscious, have like him free agency;
Albeit that through sin in a degree
We've lost the power to will,—are in duress;
For sin is trespass, and its penalty
The forfeiture of freedom; in which stress
Of bondage we God's laws are tempted to transgress.

II.

The three temptations to which sin gives birth
Are these: To change the stones to bread, to cast
Oneself from heights, the kingdoms of the earth
To rule. Or otherwise in order classed,—
First avarice, then dissipation, last
Selfish ambition. These our Saviour met,
And without sin o'ercame, when he had passed
His forty days of fasting; though not yet
Triumphant till in agony and bloody sweat,

III.

For resignation to his Father's will,
He prayed and struggled in Gethsemane.
Thus must we ever struggle here until
Resigned to what is best. Nor can we be,
Though sinning never, from temptation free
Till we are reconciled to earthly loss,
And death is swallowed up in victory.
Doubt, fear, and bitterness are but the dross
Of our infirmities, and perish on the cross.

IV.

What we call evil is not substantive,
But is like darkness, cold, and nakedness,
A negative condition which doth give
Disease, disorder, unrestraint, or stress
That are unnatural. If we transgress
The law—which is our medium of life—
We lose its gifts of health and happiness;
Which is an evil state, degraded, rife
With famine, sufferings, passions unsubdued, and strife.

V.

It is perverted good. Thus avarice,
The greed of gain, is failure to return
In charity as we receive; and vice
But reckless waste from failure to discern
The limits of indulgence, or to learn
Our passions to control. So, too, ambition
Becomes but selfish pride, except we burn
To right the wrong and seek the acquisition
Of glory which in righteousness hath its fruition.

VI.

Or evil may result from weakness,—lack
Of strength in few or many faculties,—
Whereby diseases or demoniac
Possessions come, and from which there arise
Transgressions, sins, and inconsistencies
Of mind. And evil, thus personified
In lower natures which sin falsifies,
Seems positive, producing selfish pride,
Hate, envy, dissipation, murder, suicide.

VII.

But it is always lack of harmony
Within ourselves, or in our contacts. Hence
Temptations, though all evil, may yet be
Sinful or sinless,—through our own offence,
Our weaknesses, or through our innocence;
From sin within or sin without,—our own
Or that of others. Each yields recompense,
If overcome,—salvation unto one;
Another suffering for the truth, a fadeless crown.

VIII.

The noblest minds, because most sensitive,
Are most severely tempted, and most tried
By sufferings. Ofttimes—compelled to live
In evil contacts; hating meanness, tied
To natures base and brutal; crucified
By bigotry and ignorance; in stress
Of poverty, enslaved to worldly pride;
Or forced with prejudice to acquiesce—
Their faith ends in despair, their love in bitterness.

IX.

But let not one suppose that he is tempted
Beyond his strength; or that, if he should fall,
He may from penalties e'er be exempted.
Although temptations do not come to all
Alike,—some being mostly sensual,
Some moral,—they must be proportioned to
Our strength; for surely, whether great or small,
That only can be tempted which is true
In us,—that which there is a struggle to subdue.

X.

Hence, if our strength be equal with temptations
While here,—according to our power to feel,
Our love of truth, our nobler aspirations,—
'Tis plain that God impartially doth deal
With all. Temptations equally reveal
Our weakness, strength, and possibilities
Of shame or glory; and are meant to heal
Our sins, inciting effort, sacrifice
For good, whereby to higher happiness we rise.

XI.

In short, sin, evil, and infirmity,
Disclosing what we lack and yet may gain,
If over them we win the victory
Of faith, become our glory; for 'tis plain
That if not tempted we could ne'er attain
A greater strength. And though the weak may fall,
Yet those who triumph reach a higher plane.
Hence trials all are ministerial
To good,—though by our failures made equivocal.

XII.

When I inquired of Kear how it were just
That one should suffer for his parents' sin,
Or that of others? "All things," said he, "must
Produce their kind; and as the souls within
The fleshly germs do not with them begin
Their lives, but pre-exist, they suffer here
Only as those to whom they are akin
In nature. And all sufferings appear,
And are, to faith of mediatorial character."

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

As evil is perverted good, our love,
Of all our gifts and faculties the best,
Being the source of life and joy, may prove,
Tempted and overcome, the deadliest
Curse, hatred, bitterness; and hence the test
Supreme and final of our manhood may
Become. Thus if of levity the jest,
Or if caprice and pride its trust betray,
It may be turned to hate, and put all faith away.

II.

Or it may be transfigured and survive,
As souls redeemed from earth's mortality,
And to a joy ineffable arrive,—
A love triumphant in its constancy,
Though crucified by pride and bigotry,—
To which indeed all sufferings are gain;
The secret of our Saviour's agony,—
Not that for friends redeemed he suffered pain,
But that for enemies he loved he died in vain.

III.

No doubt the ways of God are natural,
And that the providence which first had led
Our hero to a life prophetical
Was love. But when at last all hope had fled,
And pride at parting to his heart had sped
A poisoned arrow, love appeared at first
A vain, delusive fancy that had fed
A foolish vanity,—a bubble burst;
And even in his bitterness a thing accursed.

IV.

Though strong in spirit he had not attained
A perfect self-control, the stoic gift
That only is by long experience gained,—
Final temptations, doubts and fears that sift
And try our faith, and sufferings that lift
Our contemplations to the joys of heaven.
Though Oki's face he'd seen through shadowy rift,
And caught from nature the prophetic leaven,
The final test of faith as yet had not been given.

V.

This comes when on a life of love and hope
There falls the shadow of the cross,—when first
One realizes that 'tis vain to cope
With error, pride, and bigotry accurst;
That like all others who have ever durst
Maintain the right, he also must endure
Therefor a cross; that hungering and thirst
For righteousness, and every purpose pure,
Unselfish, but contempt and poverty insure.

VI.

Touched by this shadow youth's ideals fade
As summer blossoms nipped by early frost.
Confronting selfishness, chilled and dismayed,
Its nobler inspirations oft are lost.
Whoever stops indeed to count the cost
Of being true will lose his dreams ecstatic
In fear, or doubt, or wordliness; for most
Improvements and reforms are called erratic,
And every prophet deemed at first a wild fanatic.

VII.

Transfixed, though seemingly unmoved, long on
The moonlit shore benumbed and chilled he stood,
When from his sight Eniskin's form had gone,
In shadows hid. Beholding him one would
Not thought at first his silent, dreamy mood
Greatly disturbed; yet had a viper stung
His breast, its venom poison to his blood
Had not more deadly been than that which sprung
From wounded vanity and love's embittered tongue.

VIII.

Than love no torture is more terrible
To soul so sensitive, so passionate,
When true as heaven 'tis yet cast down to hell;
When with the loftiest purposes elate,
From adoration it is turned to hate.
Than love there is no thralldom more complete,
When with a false ideal it would mate,
And true and pure is trodden 'neath the feet
Of pride, enslaved and made the victim of conceit.

IX.

The days and nights that followed were almost
A blank in memory. In the wilderness
He wandered aimlessly, bewildered, lost
In bitter thoughts; tempted in sore distress
By evil demons seeking to possess
His wounded spirit; striving to regain
The power which in forgiveness finds redress
Of wrong, o'ercomes all bitterness and pain,
And counts all loss through charity eternal gain.

X.

Dimly recalled as memories of his dreams
Appeared in after-years those days and nights.
Now lying 'neath the moaning pines he seems
In sullen mood, deeming great Oki slights
His prayers; now tempted from the rocky heights
Of lofty mountain precipice to leap
Into the depths; sometimes to see bright lights
And coals of fire touching his lips in sleep;
Or hide in gloomy caves while tempests o'er him sweep.

XI.

At times his savage nature long repressed
Would seem restored, when passions fierce and wild
As angry demons filled his wounded breast;
And vows of vengeance made when but a child,
Recalled, once more his sullen moods beguiled.
Then self-contempt and shame again returned,
When gleams of sunshine on his pathway smiled;
But though all malice from his heart he spurned,
With seeming thirst for vengeance still his spirit burned.

XII.

A thirst impassioned spirits only know,
Who for the right are forced to suffer wrong.
Should he consent to be despised, and bow
Submissive to his fate? Should he so strong
Endure contempt? be counted as among
The cowardly and base? No, he would never
Submit to shame. Till the contemptuous tongue
Of pride withdrew its bitter words should ever
Thenceforth revenge be his sole purpose and endeavor.

XIII.

But how attained? The problem long he pondered.
He had forgiven for love, and then had learned
To give without return; but now he wondered
How wrong could be effaced, when love was turned
To bitterness and hate?—the thirst that burned
For vengeance be appeased? Though he could give
Without return, or good for good, he spurned
Submission to contempt. He would not live
In shame, though death should be the sole alternative.

XIV.

Not till the Moon of Leaves began to wane,
And he had grown aweary and begun
To hunger, did he seem himself again,
Or notice aught around him,—whether sun
Or moon, in sleep or waking, on him shone,—
But when his eyes at last were opened, lo!
God's messengers at every step upon
His path appeared. And soon he came to know
That true revenge was good for evil to bestow.

XV.

The first, a thistle bristling near his path,
That stung his hand as he was passing by.
"Ha! dost thou, too," he said with rising wrath,
"Emblem of scornful pride, in ambush lie
To sting me with thy venom?" Lifting high
His staff to strike it down, he saw it bore
A blossom tinted as the morning sky,
From which a bee was sipping honeyed store.
So he refrained from wrath and felt the sting no more.

XVI.

For he was glad to find the bee, and waited
Until it sought on honey-laden wing
Its secret hive, when following he sated
His hunger on its sweets, encountering
In placid mood the insect's venomed sting.
If thistles bear, thought he, their blossoms sweet,
May not some good from every evil spring?
And if the stinging bees give food to eat,
E'en bitterness o'ercome may be with joy replete.

XVII.

A special message and a prophecy
Each work of God appeared. A burning bush
The thorny thistle seemed, and like the bee
Became an angel in disguise. In hush
Of eventide, or in the roar and rush
Of mountain torrents there were whisperings,—
"Return for evil good." The crimson flush
Of darkened skies, and the bright colorings
Of clouds, betokened good that from some evil springs.

XVIII.

From Nature's book he read with open face,
And found some truth in every evil thing,
Perverted though it were, and stripped of grace.
The croaking raven on its dusky wing,
Flitting along his path, would ofttimes bring
Him bread from heaven,—communings, sympathies
With solemn truths when fasting, hungering
In spirit. Creeping serpents too grew wise,
And hissing warned of death, of dangers in disguise.

XIX.

But still in shadows seemed his way involved;
His wrongs some great atonement did demand;
Nor could he rest while should remain unsolved
The problem of revenge,—while yet should stand
Upon his name the ignominious brand
Of cowardice and shame. What deed above
Vain glory should his soul exalt? What grand
Heroic sacrifice, endured for love,
Should shame Eniskin's words and her false pride reprove?

XX.

He grew impatient of his solitude.
A ceaseless longing filled his breast—the more
As passion was o'ercome, and love subdued—
To mingle with the tribe. Perchance the hour
Of action had arrived, of which before
He had but dreamed, when Oki would concede
To him prophetic gifts; again restore
The ancient culture; give him power to read
Tradition, and from glory unto glory lead.

XXI.

And yet he lingered doubtful of the voice,
The still, small voice within, that called him thence.
How could it be great Oki had made choice
Of one so young, without experience
In counsel, and despised for indolence,
To be a prophet to his fallen race?
In fiery breasts he would but rouse offence;
For to the warrior love of peace was base,
And to forgive an enemy esteemed disgrace.

XXII.

His message none would heed; and well he knew
He would but meet contempt and arrogance.
Yet stronger in his breast the impulse grew,
Till but one fear his heart confessed,—the glance
Of scorn from eyes he once had loved. Perchance
He shrank too from the fancied grave dissent
Upon the chieftain's lofty countenance,
When thus addressed: "O Tamaned, lament
Thy deeds of blood, thy victims slain, thy life misspent."

XXIII.

Thus diffident, distrustful of his call,
He lingered, wandering in the mountain maze
Of woods and streams. The leaves began to fall,
The nights grow chill. The summer's silvery rays,
Transfigured, glowed in autumn's purpling haze.
In Nature's spirit more absorbed he grew,
Forgetful of himself,—changed as the days.
A life in death appeared, immortal, new,—
Revealed, prefigured in the autumn's golden hue.

XXIV.

Half-waking visions came, when things concealed
In outward forms, or hid from outward sense,
In nature and in spirit were revealed.
At times his outward life seemed in suspense;
Or so absorbed, enraptured, and intense
His thoughts and sympathies, external sight
And consciousness were lost. Then coming,—whence
He could not tell,—shining in golden light,
Forms, faces were revealed of beauty exquisite.

XXV.

But these were only faint foreshadowings
Of after-years, when he had come to know
Life's mysteries; that all external things
Are from within; that forms and faces grow
In correspondence with their natures,—show
Indwelling spirits; and had come to see
And talk with them, as face to face. But now
His visions are like dreams, and seem to be
But unsubstantial fancies, fleeting, shadowy.

XXVI.

The Moon of Falling Leaves was full, when he
Approached the lake, and from his wigwam door
Again beneath the shadowy pines could see
The gleam of its bright waters,—hear once more,
In the deep, rocky gorge near by, the roar
Of the wild mountain torrent. Silently
Emerging from the forest, lo! the shore
Was girt with smouldering camp-fires; and near by,
Around them, groups of dusky warriors met his eye.

XXVII.

What meant this marshalling of warriors?
His quick eye searched each camp. Lo! there appear,
Arrayed in peaceful garbs, ambassadors
Of many nations far remote and near,—
Algonquins seemingly devoid of fear
With hostile Iroquois encamped. No trace
Of warlike purpose could be seen,—no spear,
Nor bow, nor tomahawk,—no painted face;
But round their camp-fires grouped, all smoked the pipe of peace.

XXVIII.

He marvelled greatly at this gathering,
And gazed entranced upon the peaceful scene.
Was it a vision, a foreshadowing
Of what, in coming years that intervene
The present and the future life between,
Would come to pass, when Oki would restore
The brotherhood and peace that once had been?
Or scene by magic moonlight on this shore
Restored of former days, but which could come no more?

XXIX.

No, these are living faces that he sees.
Here are Oneida's chiefs of stately mien,
And there the grave-faced Lenni-Lenapes,
Around whose camp the other tribes convene,
With Ottokee and Tamaned are seen.
Near to the latter's is Eniskin's tent,
Its doorway darkened by a pictured screen,
On which, and each familiar ornament
Wrought by her fairy fingers, long his eyes are bent,—

XXX.

Eyes dimmed with tears. Alas! how slight a token
Will oft a hopeless love or grief restore!
E'en to a spirit brave, a heart unbroken,
By truth sustained and more than conqueror,
Grief may return with overwhelming power;
And love once buried yet again arise,—
Though bruised, its sweetness as a trampled flower
Exhale. E'en bitterness intensifies,
Subdued to charity, the love that never dies.

XXXI.

At last all slept save one,—the aged chief
Of Lenni-Lenape, who sat alone
As one deep brooding o'er some secret grief.
His face, on which the flickering camp-fire shone,
Was changed,—still stern, but sad and weary grown,
And troubled. Now with eyes upturned he throws
His hands aloft in prayer unto the throne
Of the Great Spirit; now with face that glows
In supplication, o'er his slumbering friends and foes.

XXXII.

But he, too, sank to rest at last; and soon
Above the mountain crest, upon the strand
Pouring its golden light, the full-orbed moon
Arose. A seer who of Oneida's band
Upon this peaceful mission held command,
Awoke from sleep,—whether he could not tell
By touch of moonlight on his face, or hand
Laid lightly on his shoulder. Or there fell
Perchance upon him dreaming a prophetic spell.

XXXIII.

He saw a slender youth of supple grace
Beside him standing in a flowing dress,—
The ancient prophet's garb of white. His face,
Though sad, subdued, and full of gentleness,
Did yet a lofty consciousness express.
Though changed, the phantom form—for such he deemed
It was, as he bewildered, motionless,
Lay listening to its words—familiar seemed;
Words which, when morning dawned, he thought he had but dreamed.

PRELUDE TO CANTO SIXTH.

LAW AND PROVIDENCE.

I.

THERE are who think there is no God because
All things are evolutions. But if this
Were a true inference, then all the laws
Of being show the same,—show that there is
No guiding mind; and if things went amiss,
And not in order natural and right,
That there might be a God,—albeit his
Designs would be capricious, hid from sight,
And being lawless be confusion infinite.

II.

Moreover, every work of man's invention—
All nice adjustments of machinery—
Would show there is no man, and no intention,
Will, mental oversight, aim, or decree.
Dismissing, therefore, this absurdity,
We yet admit that each intelligence
Is subject unto law, and must needs be
An evolution. Even Providence
Is natural,—of truth and love the consequence.

III.

All things are births, developments, constructions
From things that are, but not creations out
Of nothing. They are natural deductions;
That is rational and just. Hence about
The ways of God there could not be a doubt,
If we like him were just. If he doth act,
He acteth in some way,—never without
A lawful system. From his will, in fact,
Law is evolved; and hence he could not law infract.

IV.

Some seem to think that law is bondage. Well,
It is if violated,—will consign
The trespasser to all the pains of hell.
But law observed is freedom,—doth enshrine
All power and life, because of love divine
The evolution. Hence we plainly see
In it not only providence, design,
And mental oversight, but also the
Protection of our rights, our life, our liberty.

V.

So far from law restraining, it doth measure
All power and knowledge. Nothing can be done
Except by law. It gives and guards each treasure
Of life and happiness, and doth atone
For wrong and injury. By it alone
Is strength, finite or infinite. And hence,
The power to will and do whatever one
May choose exists but in obedience
Thereto,—whether in man or in Omnipotence.

VI.

By Providence we mean the oversight
Of all existing things by God,—control,
Direction, making all things just and right;
Adapting means to ends, so that each soul
And part shall correspond unto the whole,—
The Universal Good. And though we sin,
Or make mistakes, we yet may reach our goal,
Either through opportunities to win
What we have lost, or punishment and discipline.

VII.

But one may say: "If God all things doth rule,
Why doth he sin permit?—or give the will
And power of evil to mankind?" Thou fool!
God doth not sin permit,—albeit till
Repentance proveth vain he would fulfil
The law in love. Because God would forgive,
Doth this annul the law, "Thou shalt not kill?"
Nay, though repentant murderers may live,
Sin's wages still is death, and law retributive.

VIII.

It saith: "The soul that sinneth it shall die,"—
And yet if man exist at all, he must
Have power to sin,—the possibility
Of evil. Otherwise he were but dust,
Unconscious, lifeless. Hence it is not just
To say God doth our sin permit,—unless
Each noble gift committed to our trust
That we pervert, though it were meant to bless,
Is such permission,—even life and consciousness.

IX.

"But how and when," I said to Kear, "did sin
Originate, if not with God?—On earth
With man?" "It never did," he said, "begin.
Evil is negative,—a want, a dearth,
As cold or hunger,—lack of that by birth
Essential to, harmonious with, our state.
All things are good, all things of real worth,
If rightly balanced,—small with what is great,—
When nobler o'er inferior things predominate.

X.

"There must be harmony. If this be broken,
The law restoreth it. Disease, and death,
And hell, and every evil thing, betoken
The process which in time transfigureth
Sin to its corresponding state beneath,
Or to repentance and reform incites.
From evil evil comes. Sin must bequeath
Its heritage of hell. Each law requites
Obedience with good, and its transgressor smites.

XI.

"Existence is in states, an infinite
Succession,—more or less intelligence,
Power, knowledge, happiness. And these unite
In one harmonious being—All. And hence
'Tis plain to see, where'er we may commence,
There is above a higher, and below
A less. The higher is a providence
Unto the less,—a helper. It doth show
Thereto a light in darkness, and good gifts bestow."

XII.

But still I queried: "Who is God? If than
Each mind there is a greater, than each state
A better,—infinite increase,—how can
There be a One an Infinitely Great?—
A single mind that doth predominate
All others?" "There could not," he said,—"not
One
A fraction of the whole,—One separate
From all, and yet o'er all,—One who alone,
Apart from Universal Good, as God is known.

XIII.

"That could not be; for if God were not All,
He would be less, and hence not infinite.
He is the One of all, both great and small;
All else developments of All. A mite,
An atom, or a little mind, is quite
As truly God unto a smaller thing
As any less than All. In God unite
All parts,—not he from them developing;
For they in him exist, and from his substance spring.

XIV.

"To powers above there is no limit. Hence
All help we need, all things we would attain,
Will be vouchsafed us by God's providence,
If we but wait and strive. No dream is vain
Of glory, wisdom, happiness, or gain,
To faith. Nay, even sin and base desire,—
Howbeit that therefore we suffer pain,—
If overcome with good, will lift us higher;
And every trial prove a chariot of fire."

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

Upon the shore the chief his daughter met,
When past the hour of midnight she returned,
The bitter night she fled from Nepanet;
And as he pressed his lips to hers discerned,
In starlight gleaming, the strange light that burned
In her grieved eyes and on her fevered cheek.
With anxious care and tenderness he yearned
To comfort her; and yet seemed not to seek
Or note her secret grief,—waiting for her to speak.

II.

"Father," she said, "I know thou lovest me;
That gladly wouldst thou still thy burdens bear
Of grief alone, if only I might be,
As I have been, without a grief or care.
But, father, could I not thy sorrows share,
Unworthy of thy name, or to partake
Of its great glory should I be. Nay, spare
Me not. For thee and for my nation's sake
Will I all things endure till Heaven my spirit take.

III.

"If thou hast sinned through vanity and pride,
I have the more. And now let me alone
Therefor atone. Give me to be the bride
Of the Oneida's chief, the vengeful son
Of him whose blood was shed,—the Heart of Stone.
Thus may our tribe preserve its liberty,—
Attained through many lives, preserved through one;
Thus may I share thy glory, and with thee
May reach the Happy Hunting-Grounds from sorrow free.

IV.

"But, father, ere I go, this last request
I make of thee,—that thou tell Nepanet,"—
Hiding her burning face upon his breast,—
"Tell him, when I am gone, he must forget
The bitter words I spoke when last we met.
Say that I did not mean them,—say that I
Was true in heart, though false in tongue; and yet
Could not his love accept. Oh! tell him why
I wed Oneida's chief,—that for our tribe I die."

V.

She clung unto his neck as if she thought
He were about to spurn her from his breast,
When gently to unclasp her hands he sought,
That he might speak. "Nay, fear not,—I had guessed,"
He said, "erewhile the love thou hast confessed.
And may it not, sweet daughter, prove in vain;
Nor yet the sacrifice thou offerest.
If Nepanet true glory shall attain,
Thou shalt be his, and I a worthy son shall gain.

VI.

"Trust thou with me. Although the night be dark,
And faint the trail that I am following,
My light uncertain as the glow-worm's spark,
Yet hope again doth in my bosom spring
That Oki will at last my spirit bring
Out from these shadows to a world of light.
Henceforth my steps shall know no faltering;
No doubt nor fear shall swerve me from the right,—
That I may stand approved in the Great Spirit's sight.

VII.

"And yet the sacrifice that thou wouldst make
I will accept,—the sacrifice of love,
Which thou for me and for our nation's sake
Dost freely offer. Not that I approve
Aught but thy motive, or aught e'er shall move
Me to consent to what is base, unjust,
Or evil; but that thereby I would prove
Whether in Oki's guidance I may trust,
And the Hereafter, ere I mingle dust with dust.

VIII.

"Last night a revelation, not less strange
Than was the dream I told thee, came to me,—
Words spoken which have wrought a wondrous change
In all my thought,—alike concerning thee
And e'en our nation's life and liberty.
Spoken by human lips, they yet appear
Responsive to my prayers, and seem to be
The voice of the Great Spirit in my ear,
To guide my steps and make my way and duty clear.

IX.

"I cannot tell thee more. Wilt thou not trust
With me in the Great Spirit's guidance? Nay,
Howe'er so great our doubts and fears, we must
Yet trust in him. There is no other way
For souls in life's dark wilderness astray,
Who would the Happy Hunting-Grounds attain.
And if there be a land of rest, we may,
Forgetting what is past, its grief and pain,
Make all our loss and suffering here eternal gain."

X.

Thrilled with new hope,—though she could only
weep,—
Eniskin listened. Each assuring word—
As one awakened from a fevered sleep,
While yet scarce conscious, hears a morning bird
Among the leaves by summer breezes stirred,
While through the window morning sunshine gleams—
With inspiration of great joy she heard.
Her love approved, supremely blest she seems,
And all her doubts and fears dispelled as troubled
dreams.

XI.

But they came back that night. Alas! how soon
Faith falters ere it reach sufficiency
Of strength in God! As phases of the moon
Emotions change. That which we cannot see
We think is not and never is to be.
The way made clear, again is intricate,
And hope gives place to evil augury.
Not till in perfect trust we learn to wait
Submissive to God's will, all doubts and fears abate.

XII.

And oh! how sweet this earthly life would be,
Howe'er so great its toil and discipline,
If in all trials we could only see
But opportunities for good; define
Each source of doubt and mystery design
Of Providence, o'erruling for the best
Our errors, sins, and sorrows; could resign
Ourselves and every earthly interest
To heavenly guidance; and in trust find perfect rest!

XIII.

That night reclining on her couch of ferns
Within her wigwam, long Eniskin thought
Upon her father's words. Soon she discerns
But vain, delusive hopes therein. With naught
But disappointments seems her pathway fraught;
And sad forebodings, too, her bosom fill,
From Pahpukkeena's plaint in darkness caught.
Flitting across her open doorway sill,
The Wawonaissa wakes its lamentations shrill.

XIV.

Meantime the aged chieftain had repaired
Unto the tent of noble Ottokee,
His brother's son, and younger chief, who shared
Among the tribes of Lenni-Lenape
Next to himself supreme authority;
Whom rousing from his slumbers thus addressed:
"My son, may peace and sunshine dwell with thee;
May Oki's spirit on thy spirit rest,
And his unerring counsels rule thy fiery breast!

XV.

"My sun is setting, and in thee repose,
Thy wisdom and thy courage yet untried,
Our nation's hope. I know thy bosom glows
With lofty purpose; but beware lest pride
With thirst for earthly glory be allied.
Oh! may the spirit of thy noble sire
Who for our freedom fought and gladly died,—
That which for good doth strive, and doth acquire
Glory through sacrifice of self,—thy breast inspire!

XVI.

"But seek not conquest purchased with the blood
Of friends and foes; nor deem that otherwise
Than in the noble deeds that work the good
Of all, even of foes, true glory lies,—
That which shall give thee entrance to the skies.
All else is fleeting as the transient blaze
Of fiery Ishkoodah, the star that flies
Burning athwart the heavens. All earthly praise
Goes out in darkness when our fleeting life decays.

XVII.

"My heart is troubled. My life's setting sun
Is hid in clouds; and the Great Spirit's face
Is turned away. My work is almost done,
And is but vanity; for I can trace
Therein no blessings to my fallen race,
Nor to myself a promise or a sign
That I shall share with deathless souls a place
Among the stars of heaven that o'er us shine,
And which great Oki doth heroic souls assign.

XVIII.

"But in the gathering gloom a light appears
That faintly tints the clouds with golden gleam;
And winged words in darkness reach my ears,
As voiceless thoughts that happy spirits seem
Sometimes to send us in a pleasant dream;
Whereby I trust that ere my life shall end
I may my soul from sin and death redeem.
Could I but prove of all our race the friend,
I might in glory to the sun and stars ascend.

XIX.

"Then haste thee to fulfil my last command.
Summon our messengers at once to meet,
And place the pipe of peace in every hand.
Then bid them haste, and let each runner fleet
Bind his swift moccasins upon his feet,
To bear to every tribe this peaceful token;
Saying the aged Tamaned doth greet
His friends and foes; that he who ne'er hath broken
His promise when once pledged, these words of peace
hath spoken:

XX.

"'Brothers, our breasts let peace and friendship rule.
I light my council fire at Whispering Wave,
When next the Moon of Falling Leaves is full.
The friendly counsels of your wise and brave,
With mine and of all other tribes, I crave,—
Partly in measures for the good of all,
Wherein we may unite ourselves to save
From evils that I fear will soon befall
Our race,—and partly in this matter personal:

XXI.

"'To all the chiefs who now my daughter seek,
And to all others, be they high or low,—
Sachems or men unknown to fame,—I speak.
I will my daughter's hand on him bestow
Who shall to me the wisest counsels show
Touching the interests of our race. And none
Will I reject, be he my friend or foe.
The wisest counsellor shall be my son,
And to his wigwam lead my child, the Crystal Stone.'"

XXII.

As wont with all, with reverence profound
The young chief listened to great Tamaned;
And thus replied, his eyes bent on the ground:
"Father, whether thou livest or art dead,
Will I be ever by thy counsels led,—
Thy wish be mine, thy will a law to me.
My ears were open to what thou hast said,
And ere another moon thy words shall be
Heard by each tribe,—alike by friend and enemy."

XXIII.

"'Tis well, my son," the aged chief replied,
"That thou obeyest this my best desire;
And may my counsels e'er with thee abide.
But than my aim in life may thine be higher,—
That seeking peace on earth thou may'st acquire
Eternal peace; that when thy work be done,
Thy soul aflame with Oki's living fire,
Thou may'st receive a wigwam in the sun,
And there thy glory live and grow, on earth begun."

XXIV.

Homeward returning on the silent shore
Of the lone lake, as o'er the hills the sun
Uprose in splendor, ne'er it seemed before,
Not e'en in raptured hours of victory won,
So brightly in his face its beams had shone.
"Ah! how," he mused, as with veiled eyes to gaze
In Oki's burning face he sought, "may one
Of earthly mould dwell ever in the blaze
Of him whose soul is Fire, whose face the Day of days!

XXV.

"And yet methinks I feel a happier thrill,—
That my dim eyes can even now descry,
As once in dreams upon Poemotunck's hill,
Faintly appearing in the glowing sky,
The wigwams of the blest who never die.
Perchance—ah! yes, I see this must be true—
The seeming dimness as our end draws nigh
Is brighter vision, and that we renew
Our sight through blindness here, as heaven grows on
our view."

XXVI.

Eniskin's light canoe touched on the strand,
While he entranced stood gazing in the light;
Nor did he heed her voice till her soft hand
Was pressed upon his face,—"Father, what sight
Dost thou behold that makes thy face so bright?"
Instant his arms his daughter's form enfold.
"I thought," he answered, "o'er yon mountain height
I could the Happy Hunting-Grounds behold,
Floating as islands green on seas of blue and gold.

XXVII.

"But why so early art thou on the lake?
I would thou still wert resting on thy couch.
Haste to thy wigwam and thyself betake
To pleasant dreams. Thy face unto my touch
Is burning, thy hands chill. I fear me much
I've troubled thee with needless doubts and fears
Already past. And now I pray thee such
Thou wilt henceforth dismiss. Be of good cheer.
As this bright morning is thy life will soon appear.

XXVIII.

"As thou didst with my sorrow sympathize,
So also in my glory thou shalt share.
I have proclaimed that thou shalt be the prize
Of him who coming hither shall declare
To me the wisest counsels. Hence prepare
To be of him most worthy to receive
The happy bride. Put from thee all thy care,
In the Great Spirit trusting; and believe
That he whom thou canst love this glory shall achieve."

XXIX.

Her father's purpose thus to her disclosed,
A gleam of sunshine thrilled Eniskin's breast.
But doubt again its shadow interposed
To hide the light. For surely in this test
Of wisdom was it plainly manifest
That Nepanet could not the prize attain.
Sadly she spoke: "To what thou deemest best
Will I submit, although thy trust be vain
That he, whom I alone can love, this glory gain.

XXX.

"For Nepanet, alas! doth not aspire
To win a glorious name; nor otherwise,
Could he excel in counsel, would desire,
I fear, and for just cause, to win a prize
Which he in bitterness doth now despise.
Moreover, he hath gone, and will no more
Return. But echoes answer to my cries,
When now I call his name along the shore;
Nor voice responds to rappings on his wigwam door.

XXXI.

"Yet, father, from my path thy words have lifted
The shadow which I deemed my greatest grief;
For that thou wilt my hand on him most gifted
In counsels wise bestow, is my relief
From promise made to wed Oneida's chief.
And now that fear and shame are put aside,
I will rejoice, my life however brief,
That to the wisest I shall be allied,
And in this glory may my ceaseless sorrow hide."

XXXII.

The chief was troubled. Can it be, he thought,
That by the sacrifice of that most dear
On earth alone may heavenly peace be sought?
Can that which is our greatest sorrow here,
In the Hereafter greatest joy appear?
A shade of doubt upon his spirit fell,
Although he answered her with words of cheer:
"What the Great Spirit wills we cannot tell;
But if we trust him here, in heaven all will be well.

XXXIII.

"And doubtless Nepanet will soon return,
And even now perchance in solitude
Doth in communings with great Oki learn
What for our race may prove of greatest good.
For thou didst err that thou didst deem his mood
Averse to glory. From thy blinded eyes
Was hid the noble purpose that imbued
His lofty spirit. Than all others wise,
He will, should he contend therefor, attain the prize."

XXXIV.

Yet while he spoke—although Eniskin's face,
Upturned to his in eager questioning,
Grew wondrous bright ; while in her eyes, all trace
Of sadness gone, through tears still lingering,
As instant flashing of the oriole's wing,
Or sunlight gleaming in the morning dew,
He saw a joyous exultation spring—
A cross before unseen arose to view,
And on his shrinking soul its chilling shadow threw.

XXXV.

What if his words of cheer but served to give
His child a hope that could not be fulfilled !
Could she, when this sweet hope had ceased to live,
Survive ?—and yielding to what heaven had willed,
From earthly loss a heavenly promise build ?
Or should she not survive this doubtful test,
Could such a sacrifice with glory gild
The sunset of his life ? Could he be blest,
And through such earthly loss attain a heavenly rest ?

XXXVI.

And as the summer waned, and Nepanet
Did not return, nor scout nor messenger,
That he had sent to seek for him, had met
By forest, lake, or stream explored afar
The foot-prints of the lonely wanderer,—
Though still unshaken in his confidence
That in his purpose formed he could not err,—
He shrank the more from thought of recompense
Attained through sacrifice of trustful innocence.

XXXVII.

But strangely, as the meeting nearer drew
Of the appointed council, the bright light
Upon Eniskin's face the brighter grew,—
As oft the loveliest colorings unite,
Lending thereto a beauty exquisite,
Upon the autumn leaf; or oft are seen,
Before the lingering summer takes its flight,
And after storm and darkness, calm, serene,
And peaceful harvest days, brighter than e'er have been.

XXXVIII.

And much he marvelled how each sweet expression
By Nature taught, to greater loveliness
Was changed ; transfigured by the slow accession
Of inward light and peace ; changed, though not less
Distinct and natural,—her wonted dress
Of green and russet, with which slowly blent
Autumn's bright colorings ; her soft caress
From summer breezes caught, which sorrow lent
Deep tenderness, and resignation calm content.

PRELUDE TO CANTO SEVENTH.

IMMORTALITY.

I.

"KEAR, art thou sure there is a life from death,
Deathless, in which all that our spirits crave
Will come to pass?" I whispered, when beneath
The ancient elm whose drooping branches wave,
As once above her wigwam, o'er the grave
Of one he loved, we long in silence had
Been sitting,—"that which giveth power to save
What seemeth lost?—that maketh sorrow glad,
And each true love permits, on earth by sin forbade?"

II.

Couldst thou have seen the face he turned to mine,
Ere he had spoken,—so compassionate,
Sadly reproving, yet with light divine
Of perfect peace and trust irradiate,
And with triumphant consciousness elate,—
Thou couldst not doubted more a living flame
May here a mortal nature animate.
Nay, that thou couldst have feared such spirit came
From dust, thou wouldst, as I, have hid thy face in shame.

III.

"Not sure," he said, "that all we may desire
Will come to pass from out this life of sin;
But that to whatsoe'er we may aspire
With patient strivings, that we surely win.
All things must have their end which we begin,
Whether of life or death,—their consummation
Or natural result; fruition in
Our joys or sorrows,—final exaltation
To higher states; or unto lower, degradation.

IV.

"Life is not visible nor substantive,
But like the light or heat it is of motion,—
Emotion of the truth and love that give
All things expression, as the waves of ocean
Are wakened of the winds, and true devotion
Of inspiration of God's love the fruit.
Decay, disease, and sin are the corrosion
Of that which doth the inner life transmute
To outward, and the soul's expression constitute.

V.

"How could we rise except inferior things
That fetter life and joy were left behind?
In every death there is a birth that springs
From changed conditions more or less refined,
Whereby unto the spirit is assigned
Another body, world, surroundings, state,—
Expressions corresponding to its mind.
Hence every grave is for some soul the gate
Unto a better life or one degenerate.

VI.

"All things are from within, all life from life,
Each spirit from a spirit; and unless
The truth and love, with which all things are rife,
May perish when decay doth dispossess
The spirit of its body, and repress
Its outward action, it doth yet survive,
And to its source of being have access.
Not through the body souls their life derive,
But through the Soul of souls they all are made alive.

VII.

"Doubt not all things, as I have taught thee, are
Eternal; that whate'er exists at all
Exists forever; and that what we share
In part, although but very scant and small
It seem, having its source original
In All, exists in fulness to supply
All our desires if they be natural;
That is, of truth and love,—sole reasons why
That which is good should live, and what is evil die.

VIII.

"The finite proves there is an infinite;
The mortal there is immortality.
Each less must be of greater and unite
In endless chain whatever there may be
Less than itself. Each state is a degree
In infinite progressions, and doth prove
There is a higher,—life, eternity
Of life; this world, a perfect world above;
Each joy, a perfect joy; each love, a perfect love.

IX.

"Naught could receive if there were not a giver,
And naught could give except that it receive.
There is a fountain if there be a river;
And that we thirst, or crave, or hope, or grieve,
Is proof there is what may each want relieve.
If there be little there is surely more;
If All be infinite we must believe
There is of life and joy a boundless store,—
And naught we crave is vain, or lost that we deplore.

X.

"Yes, I am sure"—But here his voice became
A whisper indistinct, and then was still;
Except I thought to hear another's name
And voice. Perchance it was of mountain rill
The murmur, or the song of whip-poor-will
From o'er the lake afar in mountain glen.
With head bowed on his breast, he sat until
I spoke at last, touching his shoulder, when,
As if recalling his lost words, he spoke again.

XI.

"Yes, I am sure the spirit of my love
Bereft survives, transfigured, glorified,
And waits my coming in the world above;
For I dwell there in spirit, though beside
Thee in the flesh I still on earth abide;
The more distinctly it doth seem of late,
As things of earth the more in shadows hide.
Perchance with thee I may not longer wait,
And am of the new life already at the gate.

XII.

"And yet I need not ever to have died,
Had I more closely always walked with God;
For death would not the earth and heaven divide,
Nor e'er our bodies moulder 'neath the sod,
Had we God's laws observed and ever trod,
Sinless as Jesus lived, the living way.
But it is just that we should feel the rod,
The sting of death; nor otherwise we may
Escape our burdens here, sin's suffering and decay."

XIII.

This was in early summer. Not until
The autumn leaves had fallen on his grave
Did I depart. 'Twas long ago; and still
Each summer to the shore of Whispering Wave
Do I return; and what to know I crave
He teacheth me of his philosophy.
Beneath the pines, and when the tempests rave
Around my wigwam, he doth come to me
In dreams; and ever near in spirit seems to be.

CANTO SEVENTH.

I.

At early dawn great Tamaned arose,
And stood before his tent facing the East;
And while the camps were yet in deep repose
Intently watched the light as it increased.
"O Thou," he prayed, "who hath not ever ceased,—
Great Oki, Soul of Fire,—since life begun,
To shed thy beams alike on man and beast,
With cloudless face this day shine thou upon
This council; teach how lasting glory may be won."

II.

Then to his wigwam he withdrew, and there
His towering form in princely robes he dressed,
Which in great councils he was wont to wear,—
His eagle plume, his pictured belt and vest
On which he had his mighty deeds expressed.
Then coming forth into the open space
Before his tent, when o'er the mountain crest
The rising sun appeared with cloudless face,
He knelt beside, and lit the council-fire of peace.

III.

With stately tread and solemn faces, fasting,
The counsellors approached the sacred flame,
Symbol of life and glory everlasting,
And in Algonquin worship deemed the same
As that first lighted by the soul that came
Down from the sun,—and slowly gathered round,
First the great chiefs, then those of lesser name,
Circle in circle, sitting on the ground
In silence with bowed heads in reverence profound.

IV.

Ambassadors of many tribes there are,
Sachems and seers, a mighty gathering.
Here is the Bashaba, who dwells afar
By ice-bound seas whence Wabun's tempests spring;
Pometacom, the Wampanoag's king,
Dwelling Acushnet's willowy shore beside;
Adario, who hears the thundering
By night and day of great Niagara's tide;
And Grangula, with the Oneida tribes allied.

V.

And other youthful chiefs of noble mien
Have come contending for the beauteous prize.
Among the elder counsellors are seen
The pale-faced Cherokees, in councils wise;
The Seminoles, who dwell 'neath burning skies;
And restless wandering Shawanese, who roam
The forests whence Ohio's fountains rise.
Nipmucks and stealthy Pequots, too, have come,
Who make the banks of swift Quinniticut their home.

VI.

When all were seated a long interval
Of silence followed, passed in meditation,
Each with expression grave and mystical,
Invoking secretly the inspiration
Of guardian spirits of his race and nation.
Then from the flame great Tamaned relit
The pipe of peace, and made this proclamation:
"Brothers, to all who in this council sit,
First to Oneida's seer this token I transmit.

VII.

"And as its smoke ascendeth to the skies,
So may your words reach the Great Spirit's ear.
Let each now speak what seemeth true and wise
Touching the interests of our race"—But here
His words were checked; for slowly there drew near,
From the dark pines emerging into light,
And sitting down beside Oneida's seer,
A form whose face was almost hid from sight
In ancient prophet's dress, a flowing robe of white.

VIII.

Except Oneida's seer, the council gazed,
Surprised and startled by this apparition,
In silent awe thereon,—not less amazed
That with the greater chiefs it took position,
Than by its dress known only in tradition.
At length with great emotion Tamaned
Resumed: "And let each speak who hath ambition
To win my beauteous daughter's hand," he said,—
"E'en though he be a prophet risen from the dead.

IX.

"First I inquire concerning life and death,—
Whence have we come, and whither do we go?
Second, when Pauguk robs us of our breath,
How may our glory won still live and grow?
And third, I would some counsellor would show
How all our tribes in brotherhood may live,
None to another ever deemed a foe.
Thus as one nation may our tribes survive,
And none our race of its inheritance deprive."

X.

Then slowly rose Oneida's aged seer.
Taking the pipe and blowing towards the sun
A breath of smoke, he stood with face austere,
Watching the fume arise unto the throne
Of the Great Spirit. "Thus our life begun,"
He said, "by one who from the skies descended,
Doth thitherward again, when we have done
Our work on earth, return; and as is blended
This breath in air, our life in Hawaneu's is ended.

XI.

"And as thou wouldst, great chief, that I should show
How all our enmities we may dispel,
And how our glories won may live and grow,
I will Oneida's great tradition tell:
Once into darkness from the skies there fell
A woman, who, alighting on the earth,
On which at that time only beasts did dwell,
Married the creeping Tortoise, and gave birth
To twins,—sons of like strength, but of unequal worth.

XII.

"One is the source of day, Ioskeha,
Who dwelleth ever in eternal light;
The other darkness, named Tawiscara,
Whose habitation is eternal night.
These all our good or evil deeds incite,
And o'er our tribes for mastery contend.
All those who with Ioskeha unite
Attain a glory that shall never end,
And when this life is past, unto the sun ascend.

XIII.

"My counsel is—and thou art now invited—
To join with us, tribes of Ioskeha.
We are five mighty nations, all united
And known as one,—Oneida, Seneca,
Cayuga, Mohawk, and Onondaga.
Unto the latter's chief thy daughter give,—
And none is nobler than young Grangula.
Thus joined as one great nation will we live,
And all our mutual wrongs and injuries forgive."

XIV.

Then gravely spoke a pale-faced Cherokee,
Whose totem was a cross he held on high,—
An aged prophet of the Tennessee,
Who, on a mountain dwelling near the sky,
And standing face to face with Hushtoli,
The Eldest of the winds, in darkness heard
From lips unseen the voice of prophecy.
"Oneida's seer," he said, "is wise in word,
But hath, interpreting tradition, greatly erred.

XV.

"Not from the Light, but from the frozen North
Kabibonokka's children, cruel, wary,
The fierce Oneida nations have come forth.
Foes of Algonquin tribes traditionary,
Unto themselves to make us tributary
They seek, or otherwise our race destroy.
Give not thy daughter to our adversary,
If thou wouldst still thy liberty enjoy,
But to our noble chief, the youthful, brave Motoy.

XVI.

"Look on this symbol unto me transmitted,"—
Holding the cross placed horizontally,—
"As these two bars are to each other fitted
And joined in one, so may our people be
United,—two great tribes in unity.
And pointing whence the four great tempests blow,
It is the symbol of Great Hushtoli,
The Master of all breath; and thus doth show
Whence breath and life have come, and whither they
will go.

XVII.

"Our tribe came whence the morning dawns, and
goeth
Whither the sun at night doth find its rest.
We follow on its path of light, as showeth
Our sacred symbol pointing to the West.
That all must join with us is manifest,
Who journey towards the Happy Hunting-Grounds,
Seeking to reach the wigwams of the blest,
Where all is peace and only pleasant sounds
Are heard in forests ever green, and game abounds."

XVIII.

Next spoke, dressed in bright robes of blue and red,
One of gigantic form, a Seminole,
Both king and jossakeed: "Great Tamaned,
My answer to your questions is this scroll
Which now before this council I unroll.
This is the symbol of all mysteries,
Transmitted through our prophets from the Soul
Who came to us descending from the skies,
And in the Fount of Youth our nation did baptize.

XIX.

"Ours is the land of flowers. There is no mountain
Up which our feet must toil to reach the sky;
But hidden in our forests is a fountain
Whose waters from diseases purify
Our bodies, and a secret life supply
Unto our spirits. All who bathe therein,
And dwell in peace, will when their bodies die,
Renewed in life and cleansed from all their sin,
Though like thyself grown old, eternal youth begin."

XX.

A Shawanese physician, very old,
In garb fantastic of his wandering nation,
Aloft his Bag of Mystery did hold,
And with closed eyes and wild gesticulation,
Long in strange words and muttered incantation
Addressed the council. This, he said in brief,
Contained the secrets of all divination,
Whereby he brought good luck and from all grief,
Diseases, pains, and evil spirits, gave relief.

XXI.

The Bashaba, whose totem was a snake,
Fashioned to represent his mystic stream,
The Serpent River, Kennebeck, thus spake:
"Great chief, I dwell upon the earth's extreme,
Where first the rays of morning sunshine gleam.
There came the Mighty Serpent, the wise giver
Of life, Great Onniont, o'er all supreme,
Upon whose trail doth flow our sacred river,
Which is the symbol of all truth and life forever.

XXII.

"His hissings in our pines and 'mid the dashings
Of rushing streams we hear; and we behold,
Seen in his wrath, in the forked lightning's flashings
Upon the storm-cloud, his bright hue of gold.
The sky itself, he doth all things enfold
Within his glittering coils. All who would rise
Unto the Happy Hunting-Grounds must hold
This symbol in their hands before his eyes;
For o'er his body is our pathway to the skies."

XXIII.

Subtle in counsel, graceful, eloquent,
Next spoke the Huron chief Adario:
"The counsels of two pale-faced prophets, sent
From o'er the seas by their Good Manito
To save our race from sin and death, I show.
They call him God, say that he lives in heaven,—
The sky, the place where happy spirits go,—
And that to all who in this life have striven
To do his will, wigwams of gold will there be given.

XXIV.

"He wills that all our tribes should live in peace,
Not only with the pale-face but each other;
That we henceforth from cruelties should cease,
And should our thirst for blood and vengeance smother,—
Not hating more, but loving one another.
And further that he gave his only Son,
Whom they call Jesus Christ, to be our Brother
And Saviour from our sins, and who alone,
Dying that we might live, did for our sins atone.

XXV.

"Now therefore, whether this be false or true,
My counsel is that we unite with Christ;
For countless are his people, ours but few.
It were but vain his numbers to resist;
Nor henceforth can our people long exist,
Excepting Christ shall have become our friend.
All our traditions are now hid in mist;
Nor to our cries doth the Great Spirit lend
His ear, nor us from our great enemy defend."

XXVI.

Up sprung Pometacom, the fiery chief
Of Wampanoag, who had sat erewhile
In silence brooding o'er his mighty grief.
Nor had he seemed to listen till a smile
Of bitter scorn, that one would reconcile
Him to his enemy, passed o'er his face.
Fiercely he spoke: "Thy heart is full of guile,
Adario, that thou dost counsel peace
With those who would our tribes to servitude abase.

XXVII.

"With lying lips these pale-faced prophets speak.
Thinkst thou they care so much the souls to save
Of those whose hunting-grounds they steal, and make
Of every captive won a toiling slave?
If their Good Manito his Son e'er gave,
Why have they slain this Saviour whom they preach?
And if they love him now and truly crave
Our good, first let them their own race beseech
To do as they would have us do, as Christ did teach.

XXVIII.

"Give ear unto the story of my wrong,
Great father of the Lenni-Lenapes,—
At thought of which the hot blood leaps along
My veins as lightning flame. Beyond the seas,
Ne'er to return, our pale-faced enemies
Have sold my wife and child in slavery.
Can aught but blood such grief as mine appease?
For vengeance ever will my spirit cry,
And my sole joy shall be to see the pale-face die.

XXIX.

"Neither can Jesus Christ nor any other
Blot out such wrongs as ours except in blood.
No doubt our thirst for vengeance they would smother,
And preach to us of peace and brotherhood,
Till as Adario they have subdued
Each chief, and made of him a cringing slave.
None but a melted heart would e'er elude
Death by submission to his wrong, or crave
For peace till hate and vengeance slumber in the grave.

XXX.

"If the Great Spirit doth no longer lend
His ear unto our cries, and seems to sleep,
'Tis that we have not spirit to defend
Our hunting-grounds, and will no longer keep
The great traditions of his counsels deep.
O brothers! homeless on the storm-swept shore
Of the Great Sea, alone I sit and weep,—
And seem to hear afar, above the roar
Of waves, the cries of those who will return no more.

XXXI.

"If we must perish, as I fear we must,
Great Oki grant we perish not in shame.
And though our bodies moulder into dust,
Grant that there still survive the ancient flame,
Once kindled in our breasts by fire that came
From heaven, and in thy burning spirit live.
Let not this base reproach rest on our name,
That we would e'er such wrongs as ours forgive,
Or would with melting hearts our liberties survive.

XXXII.

"I counsel war. Brothers arouse! and whether
We live or die, let vengeance never cease.
Let all who would be free unite together
In ceaseless conflict with this hated race,
Deeming alike each chief that counsels peace
Or would submit, our mortal enemy.
Then Oki will no longer hide his face,
Nor deem our fainting prayers but mockery,—
Knowing that we as slaves will ne'er submit to be."

XXXIII.

While he was speaking thus, tumultuous,
Fiercely athirst for blood, the council grew;
And all who followed were unanimous
For war, until the white-robed prophet threw
His mantle back, revealing to their view
A youthful face of such strange gravity
And wondrous sweetness, that at once anew
All became grave, and listened eagerly
To hear what might the counsels of this prophet be.

XXXIV.

"Great father, I, thy messenger, if thou
Thy ear unto my message deignst to lend,
Will show to thee and to this council how
We may avenge our wrongs, our rights defend,
And when we die unto the sun ascend.
Once by thy blood I would for hate atone,
Yet through a hopeless love became thy friend
And messenger. Behold in me the son
Of the great chief whom thou didst slay,—the Heart of Stone!

XXXV.

"While yet a boy I promised to avenge
My father's blood, and have my promise kept,—
Though in a way perhaps thou may'st deem strange.
Into thy wigwam where beside thee slept
Thy daughter, then a child, I ofttimes crept
Athirst for blood; but her sweet face upturned
To mine seemed to beseech—and once she wept—
Thy life to spare; and though my spirit burned
For vengeance, more my heart for love and mercy yearned.

XXXVI.

"Thus love and hate struggled for mastery
Within my breast till there appeared in sight,
From Oki's burning spirit sent to me,
A joyous, white-winged messenger of light,
Who on my scowling visage glancing bright,
Though first repulsed, this wondrous promise brought:
'If thou canst give without return,—requite
Evil with good,—thou shalt at last be taught
All wisdom and attain the highest glory sought.'

XXXVII.

"Though thirsting for revenge, and though my love
Thy daughter did despise, I yet obeyed
The white-winged messenger, and thenceforth strove
Both to forgive and be forgiven, and prayed
That I a messenger of peace be made
To thee and to our race. Now, therefore, let
Me make this restitution, long delayed,—
Thy bloodless scalp-lock,—which annuls thy debt
Of life for life, and which I pray thee to forget.

XXXVIII.

"And as I may not more thy daughter meet,
Restore this rose-bud to her hand from me,
Which I once stole therefrom. Withered but sweet
It still remains, as e'er in constancy—
Despised but loving still—my love shall be.
O brothers! if ye can forgive, then each
May blot out all his grief and injury.
For this alike our great traditions teach,
And also Jesus Christ, whom pale-faced prophets preach.

XXXIX.

"Peace cannot be except that we forgive,
Nor wrong for wrong, nor hate for hate atone.
Blood cannot blood efface, nor glory live
That through another's grief or shame is won.
If in Ioskeha our life begun,
Then should we live as children of the light,
And give without return, as doth the sun.
But all who with Tawiscara unite,
Returning wrong for wrong, will dwell in endless night.

XL.

"Glory or gain, sought through each other's loss,
Is vain; for all are one, and One is All,
As shows the wondrous symbol of the cross.
And though our guiding spirits we may call
By differing names, from one Original
We all have sprung; of whom the cross—as are
All men, stars, trees, and winds—is typical.
And if we would his life and glory share,
We must be one in him, and hate and wrong forbear.

XLI.

"He is the Serpent, symbol of all truth,
Who holds the earth, the sun, and stars within
His glittering coils; the Fountain of our youth,
Wherein we cleanse our souls from shame and sin,
And when we die eternal youth begin.
To none who heed his counsels is he deaf,—
God, Hushtoli, the mighty Medicine
Who heals all wounds, from wrong doth give relief,
Restores the loved and lost, and bringeth joy from grief.

XLII.

"Forget not these traditions of our sires,
The men original, whose spirits, flung
As glowing sparks from the eternal fires
That light the sun and stars, came down among
The beasts from which our mortal natures sprung,
Transforming wolves to men,—our noble race.
The flame thus kindled when our tribes were young
Is wellnigh quenched in blood. Strive to efface
The wolfish thirst, and dwell in brotherhood and peace.

XLIII.

"For well I know no spirit can return
Unto the source from which all spirits came,
With whom our fathers' fires have ceased to burn;
Who deeming glory what is only shame,
Howe'er so great may be his earthly name,
Would come to Oki's wigwam stained with blood.
He only who rekindles the lost flame,
And of both friends and foes doth seek the good,
May enter Oki's home of peace and brotherhood.

XLIV.

"I counsel peace. O great Pometacom,
Though here on earth thy tears cease not to flow,
Though great thy wrong and desolate thy home,
Thou may'st bring perfect joy from out thy woe,
And gain a lasting triumph o'er thy foe.
If thou canst but forgive, thou wilt attain
A deathless glory. Oki will bestow
A wigwam in the sun, where free from pain
Thou wilt e'er dwell, and meet thy wife and child again.

XLV.

"Strive for this deathless glory! Though we perish
From off the earth, yet may we live forever.
If we our great traditions henceforth cherish,
And let not grief nor hate our life dissever
From Oki's living spirit; if we never
Would blot out wrong with wrong, nor blood with blood,
Returning good for evil, and endeavor
To live henceforth in peace and brotherhood,
From darkness light will come at last, from evil good."

XLVI.

None make response. Intent the council's members,
Awaiting Tamaned's decision, gaze
With gloomy faces on the smoking embers
Of the expiring flame. First he doth raise
His hands aloft, and Oki's spirit prays
His shame be blotted out and glories past;
May pass in peace his few remaining days,
And reach the Happy Hunting-Grounds at last.
Now in the fire his pictured belt and vest doth cast.

XLVII.

"Bring hither, Ottokee, my scalp-locks gory,
My weapons, too, and cast them in the fire.
Perish each symbol of my earthly glory,
Ere yet my life shall as this flame expire.
For better than arrayed in such attire,
Naked in Oki's presence I should stand.
And than I leave behind aught to inspire
The wolfish thirst, I would from out the land
My deeds be blotted all as footsteps in the sand."

XLVIII.

Then turning to the council, he thus speaks:
"Brothers, ye've heard the story of my shame.
This white-robed prophet coming hither wreaks,
Returning me my scalp-lock, on my name
Contempt, and all my deeds of fame.
Vain is the glory for which we have striven,
And vain the deeds which warriors' breasts inflame,
If thus through love and mercy we are driven
To count as friends the foes who have our debts forgiven.

XLIX.

"If in forgiveness there exist the power
To make but shame the glories we have won
Through blood and conquest, let us from this hour
Forgive our foes the injuries they have done,
And thus with love for wrongs and griefs atone.
I give the prize unto this white-robed seer,—
O Nepanet, my foe, my friend, my son!
My wisest counsellor thou dost appear;
Prophet of peace to all,—henceforth thy name is *Kear!*

L.

"But though I give thou may'st not here receive,
And to thy wigwam lead the beauteous prize;
For that thou cam'st not back she long did grieve,
And watched for thy return with sorrowing eyes;
And though for peace a willing sacrifice,
She could not wait, but deeming thou hadst gone
Ne'er to return, she sought thee in the skies.
Yet she is thine, and when thy work is done,
Thou'lt meet and lead her to thy wigwam in the sun."

My eyes grow dim, and mute the hidden string.
In seeming shadows now my visions fade.
The fountains and the merry twittering
Of waking birds within the sylvan shade,
With outward life my secret bower pervade.
Behold the morning dawns! From peaks descending,
Aglow with light, into each mountain glade,
And slowly with the magic moonlight blending,
It hides the life that was, and is, and knows no ending.

And thus, O Jesus, would I hide in thee
My secret life; and though with faltering feet
I follow thee, and linger wearily,—
So long deferred thy promise,—yet 'tis sweet
To live my humble mission to complete.
And though my way be lonely and obscure,
If but one soul in sympathy should greet
My lowly strain, I may henceforth endure
Reproach with secret joy, and count thy promise sure.

THE END.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper proces
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2009

PreservationTechnologie
A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATI
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 016 165 977 0